

The American Conservative

forces alive and active as a basis for a guerrilla war. The non-state forces that are emerging from the wreckage of the Iraqi state are proving to be as untar-getable as those in Afghanistan.

600 Official Notice

WANTED:
A new strategy for the War On Terror

Distance from disorder is the key to American security in the 21st century.
By William S. Lind

Instead of a strategic military offensive coupled with a weak tactical offensive, our grand strategy would urge a strategic military defensive coupled with a powerful offensive.

The second part of our prescription, an annihilating counteroffensive, needs some elaboration. Here again, Clausewitz is helpful: What is the concept of disorder? The forces can do carpet bombing. Should we ever mention the American options would be large-scale bombardment. But in conventional warfare employed. Why it will be im-employment of weapons follow successful attacks. States. As Mac-derstand, such appear to be a part, not a calcu-had Austria-Hun-on Serbia with assassination Franz Ferdinand have gotten at the world, in s' attack, might apparent Am- unconvencion- might have ob- use of such we end of efforts t- tion of weapon- But in fa-

Iran Needs a Nixon
Big Brother in a Microchip
Raimondo on Seymour Hersh

14 MILLION MIDDLE CLASS JOBS ARE NOW AT RISK OF BEING OUTSOURCED OVERSEAS. IS YOURS ONE OF THEM?

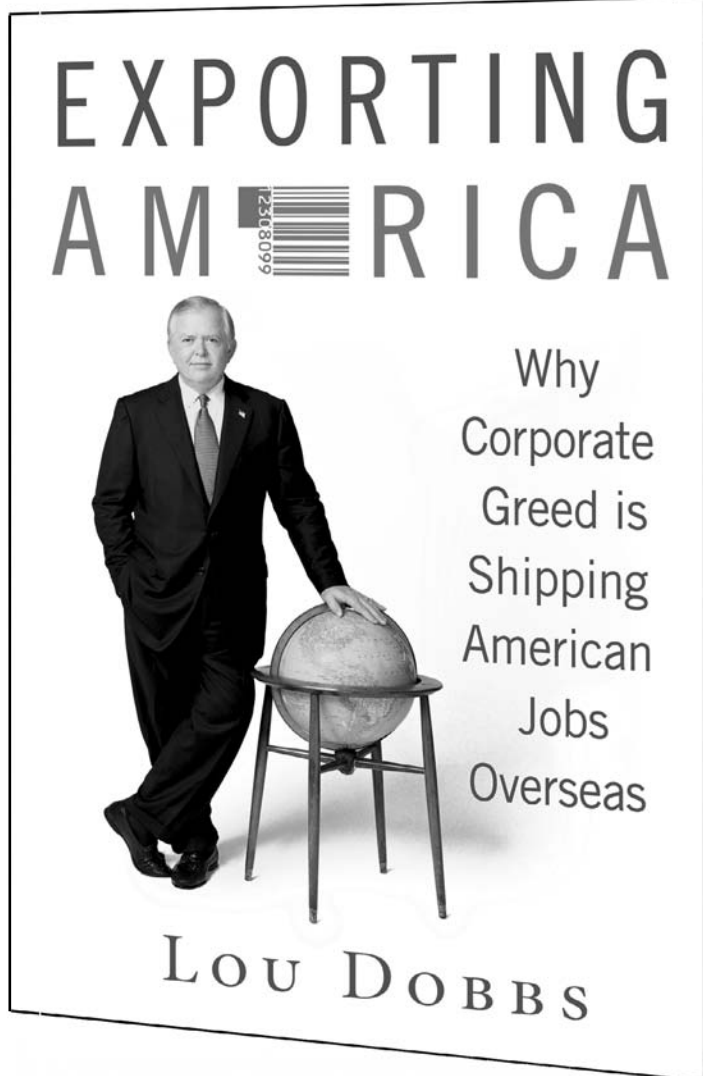
Renowned business journalist and CNN anchor Lou Dobbs takes aim at the corporate executives and Washington politicians who profit by exporting US jobs overseas—and shows what you can do to protect your own career.

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—*New York Times*

“An enlightening treatment of a huge new American problem.”

—Governor Mario Cuomo



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[COVER]

Strategic Defense Initiative

BY WILLIAM S. LIND In a Fourth Generation world, separating ourselves from centers of disorder is the key to winning the terror war. **Page 9**

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Chipping Away

BY JAMES BOVARD Implantable microchips are the next frontier in the surveillance state. **Page 18**

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What's Yours Is Ours

BY STEVEN GREENHUT Small businesses and homeowners suffer when City Council and Costco collude to bulldoze property rights. **Page 20**

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Target: Tehran?

BY LEON HADAR By placing Iran on the Axis of Evil, Bush made an enemy of a would-be ally. **Page 22**

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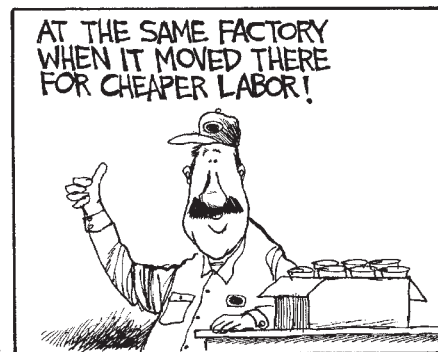
TIDE TURNING

Recent polling indicates that one well-informed and politically active constituency has, over the past year, turned strongly against the Iraq War. According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA), that would be America's Jewish population. This is very good news for the antiwar movement, bad news for the Bush administration, and especially bad for the neoconservatives who plan to have Washington spend the next decade or so attacking countries in the Mideast.

Three months before the war, 56 percent of Jews favored a U.S. invasion of Iraq; a year ago, that figure had dipped to 43 percent; the most recent American Jewish Committee poll is 33 percent in favor, 66 percent against—making Jews among the most solidly antiwar of any ethnic group.

One reason for the turnabout: a growing perception that Bush's war has placed Israel in peril. We know that there can be a taboo about pointing out that many American Jews see foreign policy through the lens of Israel, but a great many Jews have no qualms about acknowledging the connection. Says self-described New York "hyperliberal" Eleanne Hattis, "it's deteriorating rapidly, the world loathes Israel, the right wing conservative alignment with Israel makes me cringe, and it drags us down further." She's right, of course. How would a policy that makes the United States loathed throughout the Arab world benefit Israel in the long run?

The striking poll numbers say several things. They highlight a growing estrangement of the neoconservatives from the majority of American Jews. They will likely bolster all Americans who fear that since 9/11 American foreign policy has taken a reckless and self-destructive turn—as antiwar politicians and institutions will draw sustenance from increased Jewish engagement at all levels.



GARY MARKSTEIN

And, dare we say, these polls are good for Israel as well. Once the United States begins to engage the Middle East with means other than ultimatums and tanks, it will again recognize that its own interests are served by restarting and seeing to completion a peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. This is a far better guarantee of Israel's security than Ariel Sharon's policy of land grabbing and belligerence.

[MEDIA]

DATELINE: MY HOTEL

Those who wish to tune out bad news from Iraq often claim that the war is going better than the headlines suggest, but the "liberal media" is concealing it. Yet as escalating violence confines reporters to shrinking security zones, an increasing amount of coverage is being provided with the assistance of the Iraqis themselves.

Members of the Western press corps complain that their freedom to move about the country has deteriorated considerably since this summer. Unable to dine in downtown cafes, meet with local friends, or easily interview witnesses to major news events, Jack Shafer reported in *Slate* that Iraqis with backgrounds as varied as cab driver, receptionist, architect, and translator are in many instances the ones going out to do on-the-scene reporting.

These Iraqi nationals are able to blend in more easily, evade kidnappers, and leverage their knowledge of local customs. One would think they are therefore not likely to be placing any spin on what is going on in their country—they would probably know better than most other people.

Even the Iraqi cub reporters work at their peril. Often they cannot be credited on the stories they contribute to for fear that insurgents will discover their identities and kill them for collaborating with the Americans. The fact that so many journalists are virtual prisoners in their hotel rooms and Iraqis must risk their lives to allow them to file their stories tells us much about the amount of good news from Iraq that is going unreported.

[POSTWAR]

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Asked how he will respond if Iraq's January election results in the seating of a fundamentalist Islamic government, President Bush replied, "I will be disappointed. But democracy is democracy. If that's what the people choose, that's what the people choose." So let's get this straight: if Iraq installs a new despot by popular means, over 1,100 American lives and \$200 billion were well spent because an election took place? Families with an empty chair may be more than disappointed.

Clearly Bush is reading Iraq's polls—or is being told about them anyway. An American-financed study, based on 2,000 in-person interviews, shows that support for the current government has slid to 43 percent and that Moqtada al-Sadr has higher name recognition than interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi. Just 8 percent blame Saddam's government for the country's problems. (33 percent fault the U.S.; 32 percent blame foreign fighters.) Another 45 percent feel their country is headed in the wrong direction.

But the news is not all grim. The poll revealed one hopeful trend: just 15 percent of Iraqis want Pentagon pet Ahmad Chalabi, who enjoys high national name recognition, to be seated in their parliament.

[IRAQ]

THANK YOU, PRESIDENT BUSH

In a recent column in the *New York Times*, Thomas Friedman asked an American who had been stationed in Baghdad what the Iraqi nickname for American troops is—what is comparable to our “Charlie” for the Vietcong or “Krauts” for the Germans?

The answer was “The Jews”—as in “The Jews have set up a new checkpoint on the other side of the river.” Comment might seem superfluous, though Friedman himself did a capable job of explicating the likely origins of this surprising development.

[ELECTION]

PATRIOTISM=RACISM?

Remember the good old days when wanting to keep American jobs at home was merely protectionist? Now it's racist—at least according to *Slate* economics writer Steven Landsburg. He writes, “John Kerry chose the xenophobe John Edwards as a running mate. I will therefore vote against John Kerry.”

The dark side of Edwards's soul? He voted against fast track, wants NAFTA renegotiated, supported steel tariffs, and thinks it may be a problem that we've lost 2.5 million manufacturing jobs under Bush.

Landsburg continues, “[David] Duke thinks it's imperative to protect white jobs from black competition. Edwards thinks it's imperative to protect American jobs from foreign competition. There's not a dime's worth of moral difference there. While Duke would discriminate on the arbitrary basis of skin color, Edwards would discriminate on the arbitrary basis of birthplace.” But how else are leaders to legislate if not in the interest of their own citizens? And since when is promoting the general welfare considered a moral failing?

[IMMIGRATION]

LOST IN TRANSLATION

“I hope very much that I'm the last president in American history who can't speak Spanish,” said Bill Clinton four years ago. Today Arnold Schwarzenegger is out to do him one better—no, make that 20 better. Bilingualism is not enough in the multicultural Babel of California 2004, and so Governor Schwarzenegger has asked a nonprofit organization, New California Media, to translate and distribute his newspaper column into over a dozen languages for more than 700 ethnic media outlets.

As California has become the first majority-minority state in the Union, its media markets have fragmented accordingly, a swelling trend that—in the absence of serious immigration reform—other states will soon experience as well. This may come as great news for those providing translation services. For the rest of us, it's a warning: what kind of Republic are we going to have when much of the population cannot understand their leaders without an interpreter? ■

The American Conservative

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INQUIRING MIND

I read with interest Pat Buchanan's endorsement of Bush. I had been torn between voting for Bush or Peroutka for many months now. Upon reading his endorsement, I have decided to vote for the president. The only difficulty that I have is that he ran as a third-party candidate for president in 2000 and certainly pulled some votes from Bush. How does he see this election as being different from the previous one as it relates to third-party candidates?

EUGENE MICHAEL
Rochester, N.Y.

WELCOME HOME

Your steely, patriotic, true conservative, take-no-prisoners, never apologize, fiery passion and superior, razor-sharp, street-smart intellect have been sorely missed in the GOP. Honestly, it's been kind of boring without you around. Welcome home, old friend.

TONY BRUNSMAN
via e-mail

GREAT BETRAYAL

I cannot adequately convey what a shattering disappointment this is. Mr. Buchanan has chosen a very bizarre occasion on which to display party loyalty. The people occupying the White House are not conservatives in any meaningful sense of the term, and it is foolish to think that they will become so if given another term.

I worked for Pat Buchanan's campaign in my late teens. He has authored some of the best essays I have read against this immoral and idiotic war waged by people he now supports. I find his endorsement of these liars and thugs a crushing betrayal.

STEFAN JURASINSKI
Zanesville, Ohio

GOP R.I.P.

There is a blind spot in any love, whether it be for a woman, child, country, or political affiliation. I have enjoyed Mr. Buchanan's principles, but in endorsing Bush he is a man without a country. His

party is dead, the grand GOP, so he has to dig deep in the treasure chest of hope against all odds, all reason, all evidence, and rationalize a preposterous argument.

Faust sold his soul for a noble cause, for knowledge. Buchanan's bargain was ignoble, generated from fear of being homeless. In my foolish heart, I had hoped that he would take that great mind and help us find an alternative. No such luck. Bush told the most horrible lie a president can tell as a justification for war. The GOP should have held him accountable. Instead, they tell more lies and the neocons plan their next move. If Bush has another four years, the damage will be irrevocable.

ALAN VINT
via e-mail

THIRD PARTY WAY

I want to thank Taki for his endorsement of Michael Peroutka! I don't understand how Pat can endorse Bush. You would think someone who ran for president as a third-party candidate would understand principle above politics. George W. Bush is a neocon, and Pat Buchanan has ignored everything he has said in the past about the problems with the Republican Party. I will be proud to join Taki in voting for Peroutka!

JONATHAN GRUBBS
Sanford, Fla.

CROSSING THE AISLE

I am a subscriber to *TAC*, an avid online reader, and one of Pat Buchanan's top contributors during his run for president back in 1992. I bet you're thinking this writer is about to cancel his subscription and express "regret" over the endorsement of John Kerry. Wrong!

I too am supporting Kerry despite disagreeing with most of his domestic issues. President Bush has taken us into an unnecessary and illegal war that has cost the lives of thousands of innocent people and has united the world in hatred for the U.S. This alone trumps all other issues, and for the first time in my life—I am 54—I will be voting for a Democrat for president.

Congratulations to *The American Conservative* for having the courage to take a position that may cost you a few subscribers but will gain you enormous stature for being honest.

JERRY GHINELLI
Wyckoff, N.J.

CALL ME A NEOCON

"Kerry's the One" is all about why Bush is not the one and why (in your opinion) he is a failed conservative. I assume that the neoconservative view of the world is not your view, therefore I must throw off my label as a conservative and assume a new label as a neoconservative.

I am saddened to do this, as I have been a conservative for 40 years. Your thought that the number one liberal will be better for conservative values over the next four years is sickening. Trust me, Hillary will be here soon enough with or without a Kerry victory, and the Democrats will exact a horrible toll.

Goodbye *American Conservative*, hello neoconservative. We will vanquish the Islamic radical with or without *TAC*.
CHARLES ROSS
Longboat Key, Fla.

MINDING YOUR MANNERS

Scott McConnell's article was one of the most powerful and articulate criticisms of the Bush administration that I have seen. It was pleasantly devoid of name-calling and unsupported accusations. It also read like a piece of professional journalism and not like the ranting of many Bush critics, probably because *TAC* is not a pack of rabid beasts hell-bent on unseating the president by any means necessary like many of us liberals.

There are many on the Left who share your notion that Bush has behaved exactly like the stereotypes that we purvey. There are even some, myself excluded, who are suggesting that we elect Bush to a second term so that the long move to the Right in this country will be reversed (as you suggested might happen if Bush is elected again). I take exception to that position among my liberal friends. I don't really think that brag-

ging rights and debate ammunition are worth the costs of a second Bush term.

I salute the courage and dignity that *TAC* has displayed in publishing such an article as I'm sure that you will be feeling negative repercussions. You will most likely hear from me again. After reading this, I feel that I can share my opinions with *The American Conservative* and expect clear, dignified rebuttals free of personal attacks.

STEVE POTTORFF

via e-mail

POCKET LIBERALS

Your recent article supporting John Kerry for president is an abomination and the complete opposite of conservative principles. You have given up on what is most important in this election and that is the future of this country. If John Kerry is your idea of one who will support principled governance, then you have either missed what this man says or you are really "pocket liberals."

Is Bush the ideal president? Realistically, the answer is "no." However, to suggest in any way that Kerry would be better in any aspect is ridiculous and dangerous to this country. You can forget about any support in the future from me and certainly from anyone that I can speak with about this publication. Your logic and thought are without merit.

DAVID CIEMBRONOWICZ

via e-mail

EX-REPUBLICAN ABROAD

Thank you for the article "Kerry's The One" by Scott McConnell. As an American living overseas, my heart has been broken because of anti-Americanism. I've been attacked by taxi drivers, I've been insulted, and I've watched as (seemingly) the entire continent of Europe slowly gathers behind the anti-American flag.

Born and raised a conservative (from the hometown of Dan Quayle no less), I've suffered an identity crisis of sorts as I have watched conservatism grow into something evil. It has been difficult to feel connected to my party. I find myself voting Democrat not because of support

for Kerry but because Bush has become America's worst nightmare. I found comfort in your article, and gained hope that Bush will be voted out.

SARA NUNN

via e-mail

FOR THE RECORD

This is in response to the brief piece by Philip Giraldi (Sept. 27). We at Republicans Abroad are very skeptical about the "senior official" that Mr. Giraldi used as a source in disparaging our organization. There is no official in Republicans Abroad who is responsible for "Europe and the Middle East." We would recommend that Mr. Giraldi check his sources.

In each of our 55 chapters, we have received reports that they are registering four times more Americans than in 2000, very much contrary to your "four-to-one anti-Bush" figure. And they are all registering Republican. We have launched an international advertising campaign. We have started 18 new chapters in the past year. Each is fully mobilized and energized to get out the vote. We have had many influential people travel to international destinations for Republicans Abroad: George P. Bush has traveled to Mexico; Nancy Ellis Bush to the UK, France, and Germany; Jeb Bush to Canada; RNC co-Chairman Anne Wagner to Taiwan and Costa Rica, etc. The assertion that "Republicans abroad are fast becoming an endangered species" is substantively inaccurate.

CHRIS FUSSNER, JOAN HILLS,
ROBERT PINGEON, TAREK RAGHEB,
MAHMOUD ABOUL-NASR
Washington, D.C.

Philip Giraldi replies:

I have no quarrel with Republicans Abroad boasting of its stellar achievements in opening new chapters, running advertising campaigns, arranging VIP visits, and compiling telephone lists, but the point of my short article was that many in the traditionally Republican American business community overseas have been badly hurt by the Bush administration's foreign policy and are not

supporting the president's re-election with any enthusiasm. White House ignorance of and insensitivity towards most of the world has made both Americans and American products less welcome abroad than they used to be.

The "senior official" source cited in my article is a Republican Abroad chairman residing in a major U.S. trading partner whose geographical location and actual position were deliberately obfuscated so he would not be punished for his remarks. His comments were reported more-or-less verbatim and are not dissimilar to other well-documented media accounts detailing the political and economic damage that is being done to America's global interests by President Bush.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF GUILT

Steve Sailer's recent cover story ("Ethnic Electorate: Myths and Realities," Oct 25, 2004) misses what I believe is the real reason the GOP strategists are courting the minority vote. Surely Karl Rove is not wholly ignorant of the statistics Sailer presents. Political correctness is the main factor—what Paul Gottfried has aptly termed the "politics of guilt." The vast majority of citizens (let alone, voting citizens) are thoroughly infected by PC precepts and prejudices, which have been propagated for decades. The fear of being identified (by others or by themselves) as "racist," "xenophobic," or just plain "mean-spirited" would be sufficient to sway a significant percentage of white voters away from a GOP platform that called for such measures as deporting illegal aliens and tightening up the borders. So as a (short-term) means to a political end, Rove & Co. are surely smart to establish politically correct bona fides that, in the current climate, amount to political prerequisites for either major party.

IAN HUGHES

via e-mail

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com, by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail.

Goodbye, Dollar—and Empire

Whoever wins Nov. 2, two predictions seem solid: the mighty U.S. dollar has begun an inexorable decline, and the American empire is coming to an end. For whether

George W. Bush wins or loses, America is headed for a political gridlock that will rule out any bipartisan assault on our “twin deficits.”

No matter who wins, the House Republicans of Tom DeLay will retain the numbers to veto any tax increase, while Democrats will retain the strength to prevent any serious cuts in entitlements.

Thus no successful assault will be made in the next four years on a fiscal deficit of \$415 billion (4 percent of GDP) before the first wave of 77 million Baby Boomers reaches early retirement in 2008. After that, goodbye balanced budgets forever.

Our trade deficit is now \$600 billion a year, with a deficit in goods near \$700 billion. To finance our binge buying overseas, we borrow \$2 billion a day from abroad. Foreigners are using the dollars to snap up our stocks, bonds, and real estate, gaining a permanent lien on the future rents, interest, and dividends of U.S. enterprises. We have mortgaged our children's future to enjoy the good times today.

The Baby Boomers, celebrated by liberals in the 1960s as the “finest young generation we have ever produced,” will likely go down in U.S. history as the most self-indulgent and selfish.

To sustain our appetite for foreign goods, the world is being flooded with dollars. But there are signs that world is growing weary of financing our consumption. The price of oil, denominated in dollars, has soared to \$55 a barrel. The price of gold has risen from \$260 an ounce to \$420. The dollar has lost a third

of its value against the euro under Bush. The world is betting against us.

The only question seems to be: will the dollar's decline be gradual or will there will be a run on the dollar, as with the Mexican peso? If the latter, the Fed would have to raise U.S. interest rates to bring investors back into the market to buy the Treasury bonds to finance our budget deficit. Then, bye-bye recovery.

A sinking dollar also means rising prices for imports, which are now near a two-century high at 15 percent of our entire economy.

The deindustrialization of America could be reversed if we were willing to return to Hamiltonian economics, rewrite our tax and trade laws, and dump the WTO into the Atlantic. But the transnational corporations that finance both parties will not allow it, for their executives have grown royally rich transferring factories out of the United States into the low-wage countries of Asia and the Third World.

The dirty little secret of our era is that the interests of Middle America are now in conflict with the interests of America's corporate elites. They are anxious to get out of the United States and shed their American work force.

In sustaining the empire, we are suffering from a separate deficit—of imperial troops. With an army of only 480,000, only a fraction of them combat troops, we cannot both defeat the rising Iraqi insurgency and credibly threaten Iran and North Korea with a preventive war to achieve regime change. And Iran and North Korea know it.

Any attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would invite Iranian support for Shia insurgents in Iraq and acts of terror against American installations across the Middle East. U.S. casualties would rise, oil prices would hit \$80 a barrel, and the war of civilizations could be upon us. Any attack on North Korea's nuclear facilities could ignite a peninsular war and risk atomic retaliation on U.S. troops.

Where would we get the troops to fight such a war? Should a President Bush or Kerry ask for a draft to fight another land war in Asia, Congress would turn him down or be turned out of office.

Walter Lippmann described a credible foreign policy as one that “consists in bringing into balance, with a comfortable surplus of power in reserve, the nation's commitments and the nation's power.” By that standard, U.S. foreign policy is bankrupt. Under the Bush Doctrine, we are committed to fight until we pacify and democratize Iraq, and to be prepared to wage preventive wars on Iran and North Korea to deny them nuclear weapons.

Yet we do not have the troops to guarantee these goals. Moreover, we lack the military, if challenged, to honor all the guarantees we have given to the NATO nations, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Australia, and Thailand.

The Dow is falling, the dollar is sinking, our dependency on imported oil is growing, our country goes billions deeper into debt every day, and U.S. forces are stretched to the limit containing a medium-sized insurgency in a medium-sized Arab country.

An American empire? Who are we kidding? ■

[what would kennan do?]

Strategic Defense Initiative

Distance from disorder is the key to winning the terror war.

By William S. Lind

IN THE CACOPHONY of an election year, one matter of prime importance seemed to be agreed by all parties: in the so-called War on Terror, America must remain on the offensive. Immediately before George W. Bush's State of the Union speech, the White House released as an excerpt, "America is on the offensive against the terrorists." Speaking to the Congress of Tomorrow in Philadelphia later the same month, Bush said, "No question, we will win the war on terror by staying on the offensive. This administration and this leadership is committed to making sure we stay on the offensive against the terrorists." He told the American Legion, "We're on the offensive against terror, and we will stay on the offensive against terror." Following the Madrid railway bombings, the *Washington Post* reported, "Bush's aides said he began talking to other world leaders about his determination to remain on the offensive in the war on terrorism." It sounded as if the ghost of von Schlieffen prowled the halls of the Bush White House.

The offensive strategic orientation of John Kerry was subtler but present nonetheless. In March 2004, speaking to the International Association of Firefighters, Kerry said, "I do not fault George Bush for doing too much in the War on Terror; I believe he's done too

little." And in a speech at Drake University in December 2003, where he laid out a broad foreign-policy vision, Kerry said, "From the Battle of Belleau Wood to the Battle of the Bulge, from Korea to Kosovo, the story of the last century is of an America that accepted the heavy responsibility of its historic obligation—to serve as not just a beacon of hope, but to work with allies across the world to defend and extend the frontiers of freedom...To provide responsible leadership, we need ... a bold, progressive internationalism—backed by undoubted military might—that commits America to lead in the cause of human liberty and prosperity." This is strong Wilsonianism, which by its nature puts America on the strategic offensive.

There is little doubt that "being on the offensive" sounded good to most voters. But if the objective is to design a strategy that brings victory in the War on Terror, a different approach may have much to recommend it. That oft-quoted if seldom read Prussian, Carl von Clausewitz, believed that the defensive was the stronger form of war.

Early in his book *On War* (a German friend has a first edition; he notes, "It is in perfect condition. It was in a regimental library, so it was never touched."), Clausewitz writes, "defense is simply

the stronger form of war, the one that makes the enemy's defeat more certain ... We maintain unequivocally that the form of warfare that we call defense not only offers greater probability of victory than attack, but that its victories can attain the same proportions and results." In a direct swipe at most of what is being said and written at present, he perorates, "So in order to state the relationship precisely, we must say that *the defensive form of warfare is intrinsically stronger than the offensive* [emphasis in original]. This is the point that we have been trying to make, for although it is implicit in the nature of the matter and experience has confirmed it again and again, it is at odds with prevalent opinion, which proves how ideas can be confused by superficial writers." And, perhaps, by candidates for high political office.

What might a defensive strategy in America's War on Terror look like? Before we can approach that question, we must address two other points. First, the threat America faces is not merely terrorism, which is only a technique. The threat is Fourth Generation warfare, which is a vastly broader phenomenon. Fourth Generation war marks the greatest dialectically qualitative change in the conduct of war since the Peace of Westphalia that ended the Thirty Years

War in 1648. It has three central characteristics:

- The loss of the state's monopoly on war and on the first loyalty of its citizens and the rise of non-state entities that command people's primary loyalty and that wage war. These entities may be gangs, religions, races and ethnic groups within races, localities, tribes, business enterprises, ideologies—the variety is almost limitless;
- A return to a world of cultures, not merely states, in conflict; and
- The manifestation of both developments—the decline of the state and the rise of alternate, often cultural, primary loyalties—not only “over there,” but in America itself.

Second, no state armed forces know how to defeat Fourth Generation opponents militarily, and thus far none have been able to do so. Politically, the most fundamental characteristic of the Fourth Generation, a crisis of legitimacy of the state, is not recognized in any national capital. Combined, these two facts render many states extraordinarily vulnerable to Fourth Generation opponents.

Col. John Boyd, USAF, America's greatest military theorist, defined grand strategy as the art of connecting to as many other independent power centers as possible, while isolating the enemy from as many independent power centers as possible. The grand strategic question facing the U.S. is how to do that in a 21st century that will increasingly be dominated by non-state, Fourth Generation forces.

The answer begins by considering why the state first arose toward the end of the 15th century. Medieval Europe was a highly ordered, cultured, and successful society. It was brought down primarily by the plague, a point of more than historical interest in a world where many non-state forces may be able to

carry out biological attacks. After the medieval order fell, it was succeeded by disorder, which led naturally to a strong desire for order, which in time was supplied by the state.

As we already see in those parts of the world such as West Africa where the state is disappearing, the state, like the medieval world, is followed by disorder. A Fourth Generation world will be one where disorder spreads like mold in a damp bathroom.

What does Colonel Boyd's definition of grand strategy mean in such a world? It means America's grand strategy should seek to connect our country with as many centers and sources of order as possible while isolating us from as many centers and sources of disorder as possible. This is the only reasonable chance of preserving something called the “United States” in a 21st century dominated by Fourth Generation war. And, as we will see, it leads toward a defensive, not offensive, military strategy.

What do we mean by centers and sources of order? First, places where the state still stands. The state arose to bring order, and in portions of the world it continues to do so. While the crisis of legitimacy of the state is universal, that does not mean it will everywhere reach catastrophic proportions. Those places where the state endures not simply as an empty form will remain centers of (relative) order. America is already connected to those places in a wide variety of ways and should strive to remain so. Actions such as the war in Iraq that tend to isolate us from successful states run counter to our interests.

In a Fourth Generation world, surviving states will not be the only centers of order. One of the central characteristics of the Fourth Generation is a return to a world where culture will often be more significant than statehood, and some cultures tend toward order. An example is Chinese culture, which extends well

beyond the borders of the Chinese state. Order is the highest Chinese virtue; so, at least, Confucianism would suggest.

As people around the world transfer their primary loyalty from the state to a wide variety of other entities, some of these entities may also emerge as sources of order. Religions may become sources of order; we see that happening today as Christianity grows in places of chronic disorder such as Africa. Ideologies may be centers of order, depending on the ideology. Businesses and other commercial undertakings may be sources of order. So might mercenary armies. Because some, perhaps many, sources of order in the 21st century will not be states and may even appear strange or disreputable, the people who run foreign ministries may find it difficult to imagine building connectivity to them. But that is one of the novel actions the Fourth Generation will require.

One of the primary centers of disorder in the 21st century will be failed states—areas where the state has either disappeared or become simply one more criminal gang among many. Current examples include much of Africa, Somalia, Mesopotamia (following America's destruction of the Iraqi state), Afghanistan, parts of the former Soviet Union, and the West Bank of the Jordan River. These areas represent the future for much of the world. Just as some cultures are likely to be centers of order, others will be centers or sources of disorder.

One culture provides an example of the fact that centers and sources of disorder may not be identical—Islam. Because Islam is a religion of rules, it is capable of providing internal order in Islamic societies. As Robert Kaplan has noted, a stranger with a fat wallet can walk safely through some of the poorest Islamic slums. Islam, however, is likely to be one of the principal sources of dis-



order in a Fourth Generation world, even while some parts of the Islamic world may be centers of order. The reason is that Islam demands its believers wage endless *jihad* in the *dar al harb*, the non-Islamic world (literally the “world of war”), and a world where the state is weakening will be a happy hunting ground. The long-standing Arab military tradition of irregular light cavalry warfare is especially well suited when adapted with modern technologies and carried out at operational and strategic levels. Indeed, that is much of what Washington now calls terrorism.

One important way in which centers of disorder will also act as sources of disorder will be by producing hordes of refugees and emigrants. It is natural to flee disorder. But as some European countries have already discovered, accepting refugees from centers of disorder imports disorder. Just as people from highly ordered cultures, such as Germans or Scandinavians, take order with

them wherever they go, so people from disordered places are bearers of chaos. The ways of life necessary for survival in centers of disorder—lying, cheating, stealing, and killing—become habits, and they are not easily left behind.

Other centers and sources of disorder will to some extent mirror centers of order: religions, ideologies, commercial enterprises (the drug trade is already a powerful example), mercenaries, and so on. One source of disorder that will not have a mirror image is disease. Centers of disorder will become breeding grounds for plagues and diseases of every sort, and some of them will travel well. West Nile virus is already a growing concern in the U.S. and it is merely the forerunner of a vast Pandora’s box. The fact that some diseases may be genetically engineered as weapons of war will make the danger all the greater.

The Bush administration appears to recognize dimly that the fundamental fault line of the 21st century will be that

between order and disorder. In his Sept. 25, 2003 speech to the United Nations, Bush declared, “Events during the past two years have set before us the clearest of divides, between those who seek order and those who spread chaos.” The administration errs in assuming that the forces of order are the stronger party, and this assumption underlies its offensive strategy. But because the root of Fourth Generation war lies in a crisis of legitimacy of the state, and the state is still the main agent of order in the world, the forces of order in the 21st century will be weaker than the forces of disorder. When the Bush administration decided to invade Iraq, it assumed order would be easy to maintain or restore because the Iraqi state would endure. The actual effect of the invasion was to destroy the Iraqi state and replace it with chaos.

This brings us to the next question: what do we mean by “connect” and “isolate”? Connection is easy enough to

understand. Goods, money, people, and ideas all flow freely with minimal barriers. Americans view those to whom we are connected as friends, extending help in times of need and also asking for and receiving assistance, including in war. Commercially, we buy their products and sometimes they even buy ours.

“Isolate” is more difficult to understand, in part because in the lexicon of the present foreign-policy establishment, “isolationism” is a term of opprobrium.

WHEN WE CHOOSE TO **ENGAGE CENTERS AND SOURCES OF DISORDER**, ATTACKING THEM MILITARILY OR DEMANDING REFORMS INCONSISTENT WITH THEIR CULTURES, WE PROVIDE AN EXTERNAL **THREAT AGAINST WHICH THEY CAN UNITE**.

But as America learned on Sept. 11, a Fourth Generation world will be a place where our physical security will depend on our ability and willingness to isolate ourselves from certain forces.

What isolation means will vary from case to case, but in some situations it will require actions that appear harsh by current standards. For example, we may find it necessary to prohibit people from certain places from entering the U.S. We may need to profile on a variety of bases, including religious belief and ethnic origin. Isolation may also inflict hardships on Americans, as when we must avoid becoming dependent on imports such as Middle Eastern oil.

In general, isolation will mean minimizing contacts that involve flows of people, money, materials, and new primary loyalties, such as religions and ideologies, into the United States. Flows in the other direction will generally be less dangerous, except for the fact that one-way relationships are difficult to sustain. They tend to become reciprocal, which means importing danger. Americans will require a newfound self-discipline in a Fourth Generation world, realizing they

cannot have it all (and have it cheaply) without creating serious threats to America’s homeland security.

In terms of foreign relations, isolation will more often apply to regions where the state is weak or has vanished. But it will sometimes be necessary for us to isolate ourselves from other states, especially states that exist in form but not in reality. Unfortunately, friendly relations will leave open the door to the non-state elements that are the real

powers within the hollow form of the other state, and those powers may be threats to us. Saudi Arabia may soon be a state that falls in this category.

How does this isolate the enemy, which in our strategy means centers and sources of disorder, from other independent power centers? Here, our proposed grand strategy works indirectly, in a way John Boyd might appreciate. To use one of his favorite expressions, it folds the enemy back on himself.

As the offensive strategy of the Bush administration has demonstrated, when we choose to engage centers and sources of disorder, attacking them militarily or demanding reforms inconsistent with their cultures, we provide an external threat against which they can unite. Conversely, if we isolate ourselves from them, we will help them focus on and thus accentuate their internal contradictions. This is a classic case of inaction being a form of action.

The Islamic world offers an example. Islam mandates *jihad* against all non-Islamics, which means Islam will always be a threat to the U.S. But Islam itself is also riven with internal conflicts. Those

internal conflicts are now minimized because Islamics can call for unity against an external threat. Even so, internal conflicts persist: many Shi’ite Iraqis blame car bombings in Shi’ite areas on Wahhabi Muslims.

In *Terror’s Mask: Insurgency Within Islam*, Michael Vlahos argues that what we are seeing in the Islamic world today follows an age-old pattern. Purist elements arise that accuse existing Islamic governments of straying from Islam; they triumph, only to find that pure Islam cannot govern; attempting to make things work, they also become corrupt; and new purist elements gather to bring about their overthrow. This cycle could work to America’s advantage if she isolated herself from it, because it focuses Islamic energies inward. As Boyd would say, it tends to fold Islam back on itself.

What are the implications for the conduct of strategy, the military component of grand strategy?

First, note that no strategy is a hard and fast rule that can be applied mechanically. Strategy is an art; its conduct, as Helmuth von Moltke said, is a matter of expedients. In the conduct of strategy, the engineering approach to problems favored by Americans is not useful. Past attempts along engineering lines, such as the Weinberger Doctrine and the Powell Doctrine, resulted only in pseudo-strategies that were useless in the real world. Real strategies do not seek to create templates but rather inform and shape specific actions, harmonizing them and giving them a coherence that will often be visible only in retrospect.

Within this context, one of the first implications of our recommended grand strategy is that America’s current military strategy—a strong strategic offensive coupled with a weak tactical offensive—is wrong. Strategically, we are launching military attacks on perceived

opponents worldwide, or at least threatening to do so, under a doctrine of preventive war. But tactically, our attacks are weak because it is relatively easy for our real enemies, non-state forces, to sidestep them.

Both Afghanistan and Iraq provide examples. America took the strategic military offensive, invading both countries. But in Afghanistan, on the tactical level, both al-Qaeda and the Taliban survived our attempts to destroy them and are now coming back. The reason they could do so is that our Second Generation armed forces fight by putting firepower on targets, and Fourth Generation forces are very good at making themselves untargetable. Even in Operation Anaconda, when al-Qaeda stood and fought, the inability of the Second Generation American Army to fight a battle of encirclement (something that is central to Third Generation tactics) allowed the enemy to escape with small losses.

The situation in Iraq is similar. For the most part, the Iraqi armed forces did not contest our advance to Baghdad. Whether that was part of their strategy is not yet known. But the result was to leave those forces alive and armed to serve as a basis for a guerrilla war. The non-state forces that are emerging from the wreckage of the Iraqi state are proving to be as untargetable as those in Afghanistan.

Instead of a strategic military offensive coupled with a weak tactical offensive, our grand strategy would urge a strategic military defensive coupled with a powerful strategic and tactical counter-offensive. In simple terms, this means we would leave centers and sources of disorder alone militarily (and in other ways) unless they attacked us. But if they attacked us, our response would be Roman, which is to say annihilating.

The logic of a defensive strategy is almost self-evident. If our grand strategic goal is to connect ourselves to order

while isolating ourselves from disorder, we will not want to undertake military offensives aimed at other states that are themselves centers of (again, relative) order. If successful, such offensives will usually result in the destruction of the opposing state and its reduction to a new center of stateless disorder. Offensives against centers and sources of disorder run directly contrary to the goal of isolating ourselves from them. As we see both in Afghanistan and in Iraq, the most thorough way to enmesh ourselves in a center of disorder is to invade and occupy it. A strategically defensive military posture is a necessary outgrowth from our recommended grand strategy.

The second part of our prescription, an annihilating counteroffensive, needs some elaboration. Here again, Clausewitz is helpful:

What is the concept of defense? The parrying of a blow. What is its characteristic feature? Awaiting the blow. It is this feature that turns any action into a defensive one; it is the only test by which defense can be distinguished from attack in war. Pure defense, however, would be completely contrary to the idea of war, since it would mean that only one side was waging it. Therefore, defense in war can only be relative, and the characteristic feature of waiting should be applied only to the basic concept, not to all of its components.

The challenge facing an annihilating counterstroke is not theoretical but practical: how do we accomplish it? There may be some instances in which our Second Generation armed forces can do it, for example by carpet bombing from B-52s. Should we ever succeed in transitioning the American armed services to the Third Generation, more options would open up, such as

large-scale battles of encirclement. But in some cases, unconventional weapons will have to be employed.

When that is the case, it will be imperative that the employment of unconventional weapons follows instantly after a successful attack on the United States. As Machiavelli would understand, such a reaction must appear to be a "spasm" on our part, not a calculated act. In 1914, had Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia within 48 hours of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, she might well have gotten away with it. While the world, in shock over the 9/11 attack, might have accepted an apparent American spasm with unconventional weapons, it also might have objected that any first use of such weapons would be the end of efforts to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

But in fact, from a Fourth Generation perspective, the genie of WMD is already out of the bottle. The Fourth Generation threat is not states delivering nuclear weapons by ballistic missile but non-state actors developing genetically engineered plagues that can be delivered anonymously by shipping container (small nuclear weapons, bought or stolen, may come the same way). The technology already exists, and unlike that required to build nuclear weapons, it does not require much in the way of facilities. It is knowledge based, and the knowledge is or soon will be universally available. Such plagues can be more, not less, devastating than nuclear weapons.

A defensive military strategy that includes an annihilating counterattack is consistent with our grand strategy of isolating centers and sources of disorder while folding them back on themselves, yet it runs no danger of being perceived as weakness on our part. On the contrary, it both demonstrates and demands more strength of will than is currently evident in the Washington establishment, in either political party.

The next implication, or perhaps precondition, of our grand strategy is one that is very difficult, yet essential, to grasp. America itself may not remain a center of order in a Fourth Generation world. As dangerous as the importation of Fourth Generation war into America is, more dangerous still is the Fourth Generation war that America may develop from within.

To survive the crisis of legitimacy of the state that lies at the heart of Fourth Generation war, a state needs two qualities: an open political system and a unitary culture. At present, America has a closed political system, dominated by an establishment that is in essence a single political party, and she is pursuing a policy of multiculturalism that enhances and exacerbates cultural frictions. While an open political system and a unitary culture are to some degree fungible—Japan's unitary culture will probably allow the Japanese state to survive despite its closed political system, while Switzerland's open political system preserves legitimacy despite three distinct cultures—any state that has neither is likely to experience a crisis of legitimacy. At the least, we cannot assume that the United States will not experience such a crisis, to the point where self-generated Fourth Generation war is not even a possibility. Police departments in some large American cities would be quick to note that they are already facing Fourth Generation opponents on the streets.

There are, of course, steps the American state could take to minimize the chance of Fourth Generation war developing here. The most urgent is to end the current *de facto* policy of open immigration. Because multiculturalism works against acculturation of immigrants, mass immigration from other cultures is a clear and present danger in a Fourth Generation world. When large numbers of immigrants retain a primary loyalty to

their own cultures rather than to the American state, they provide an ideal base for Fourth Generation war.

More broadly, if America is to avoid Fourth Generation war on her own soil, she needs to address the two origins of the crisis of legitimacy of the state. That

tion such as the Patriot Act. On the contrary, giving the state extraconstitutional powers will exacerbate its crisis of legitimacy. The American Constitution, as it was created and understood by the founders, is a means to a new legitimacy, not an obstacle to it.

BECAUSE MULTICULTURALISM WORKS AGAINST ACCULTURATION OF IMMIGRANTS, MASS IMMIGRATION FROM OTHER CULTURES IS A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER IN A FOURTH GENERATION WORLD.

means opening up the political system and abandoning multiculturalism for a policy of encouraging what used to be called Americanization (and is in fact the adoption of Anglo-Saxon norms, at least in the public square). Americanization means actions such as restoring America's public schools as primary centers of acculturation, a role they played effectively a century ago, and making English the only legal language in public business. Opening the political system means actions such as giving third parties a real chance against the two major parties, term limits, putting "none of the above" on the ballots, reducing the power of money in politics (what American politicians call "campaign contributions" are recognized in the rest of the world as bribes), making much more use of ballot initiatives and referenda, and restraining the judiciary from legislating.

On the grand strategic level, where foreign and domestic policy unite, avoiding Fourth Generation war on America's own soil (regardless of its source) means recognizing that in a Fourth Generation world, the enemy is disorder itself. This does not mean that the answer to the Fourth Generation threat is to increase the raw power of the state through ill-considered legisla-

America's ability to prevent the spread of Fourth Generation war elsewhere in the world will be small. Overt American military support to states facing Fourth Generation threats will most often be counterproductive because it will undermine the legitimacy of the government the United States is fighting to uphold. The more relevant question is how an America that has succeeded in avoiding the Fourth Generation at home might relate to a world where the state is generally in decline.

The Islamic world, as noted, may not everywhere be a center of disorder, but it is likely to be a vast source of disorder. Isolating ourselves from it will mean weaning ourselves from dependence on Arab oil (Russian oil could substitute, at least for a while). Because China may be a major center of order in the 21st century, those voices in Washington that see war with China as inevitable represent folly. From a Fourth Generation perspective, America and China are united by the most powerful of all strategic common interests, an interest in the preservation of order. China should be viewed as a strategic ally of the first importance, under any government that can maintain China's internal unity.

Latin America is likely to be an area where the crisis of legitimacy of the state

sharpens and Fourth Generation forces grow more powerful. Isolating the United States from the resulting disorder will above all mean effective immigration control. Africa is already being devoured by Fourth Generation war, which is not surprising in a region where states were never real and most governments are kleptocracies. The rapid spread of Christianity could provide a countervailing force, but Africa's future is probably war, plague, famine, and death. Isolating America from Africa will be necessary but should not be difficult, barring pure imbecility on the part of American politicians. India's future is uncertain; her national unity depends on maintaining the veneer of the Raj, which is wearing a bit thin. Isolating America from a disordered India, should India crumble, would not be difficult.

Europe's future, like that of the United States, is not so assured as some may assume. Europe has imported an enormous source of disorder in the form of immigrants from other cultures, many of them Islamic. It is by no means impossible that the 21st century will see Europe compelled to undertake a second expulsion of the Moors. If Europe is to survive, it will have to bring its birthrate up substantially. Russia is an important part of Europe, and regretably it is a part where the state is now fragile. The U.S. missed a golden opportunity to forge an enduring, strategic alliance with Russia when Communism fell; to the degree that opportunity has not been lost—largely through inane American actions such as going to war with Serbia on behalf of Islam—it should be pursued.

One theme shines through this brief circumnavigation: the requirement that America not be dependent on any part of the world that is a center or source of disorder. Here, the implication is less for American foreign policy than for American economic policy. While the United

States need not pursue a policy of autarky, it does require what might best be termed full economic independence. That is to say, we need to be able to manage on what we've got if we have to, in terms both of natural resources and manufacturing capability.

By now, one point should be clear: a defensive strategy oriented toward a Fourth Generation threat leaves us with an entirely different frame of reference from the one that now prevails in Washington. Everything changes, in what would be the greatest alterations in American grand strategy, military strategy, and force structure since 1917.

Nothing illustrates better the magnitude of the challenge than the response a defensive strategy and its logical outgrowths would surely elicit from those

in power. "Is such a transformation even imaginable politically?" they will ask. Their answer, stated or implied, will be, "Certainly not." At the same time, the question that the decline of the state, the state's loss of its monopoly on war, and the rise of the Fourth Generation poses is, "Would even these changes be sufficient to enable the United States to protect itself in a world dominated by Fourth Generation war?" The distance between those two questions measures the likelihood that the American state will survive the 21st century. ■

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The Stupid Party Across the Pond

Conservatives are swept into the dustbin in Blair's Britain.

By Peter Hitchens

BRITISH VOTERS HAVE just humiliated the main opposition movement, the Conservatives. In a special parliamentary election in the northern town of Hartlepool, the once-supreme party of Margaret Thatcher finished a bad fourth. This may seem a strange way for the people to hit back at a Labour government that is widely despised and disliked, but it makes a strange sort of sense. For the last seven years, the Tories have been so feeble that they have actually managed something previously unknown in political history. They have become more unpopular out of power than they were in office, so much so that nobody now believes that they can win the general election expected next May. And, thanks to our more-or-less rigged system of parliamentary districts, it is a good deal easier for the voters to take revenge on the Tories than to do any damage to the governing Labour Party. Most Labour districts are safe from anything short of a political earthquake. Dozens of Tory MPs tremble on the edge of tiny majorities.

This is not as it should be. Our prime minister's American popularity is not merely useless to him at home. It is rapidly becoming an embarrassment, as the last rags and tatters of justification for the Iraq War are stripped away by the emerging truth. He is regarded as a fake, an actor, and an empty vessel both by his own supporters and his opponents. His lawyerly evasions are becoming a national joke. In his latest speech to his party convention he pretended to apologize for having misjudged the intelligence on Saddam Hussein's phantasmal

weapons of mass destruction. But careful analysis of the text showed that he had not actually done so at all—not that it would have been terribly important, since the intelligence was enhanced under pressure from him in the first place. Several prominent commentators—not this one—have recently suggested that Blair has actually become unhinged or taken leave of his senses.

Far from it. Blair has just announced that he is going to retire four years from now, an action that would indeed be insane in normal times. But not here and now, where almost all the rules of proper politics have been suspended. The Tory opposition is weak, useless, divided, broke, and verging on institutional senility. The Labour Party is seriously short of telegenic, coherent men or women who could easily take over from him. Indeed, most of its senior figures are little more than blurs as far as the public are concerned. One or two of these shapeless people are going to have to cohere into serious potential prime ministers by 2008, but by then Blair will already be selling his memoirs and preparing to go on the lecture circuit. His only real rival is the sulking, glowering finance minister, Gordon Brown, who dares not stab Blair in the front or the back because in British politics the obvious assassin usually does not pick up the fallen crown. This Brown-Blair rivalry keeps our political journalists in business, since everything the two men say or do can be decoded as part of an unspoken war, far more interesting than the non-contest between Labour and Tory parties. It is

very like old-time Sovietology and probably just as wrong, except that there is no doubt that the intelligent, well-educated, socialist fanatic Brown genuinely despises the butterfly-minded, simpering ignoramus who has the top job because he looks and sounds better on TV. Yet it barely matters, since Brown controls all the main areas of government policy. As I write this, I have to admit that it is always possible that Brown will finally snap and precipitate the putsch he longs to lead. It is possible that Blair will finally tire of Brown's dissident mutterings against him. But like Sherlock Holmes and Professor Moriarty, locked in each other's arms as they tumble into the Reichenbach Falls, neither can destroy the other without destroying himself.

The Iraq War has surprisingly little to do with this. Brown has not said much about it, but that could be because he wants to look as if he opposes it. There is not the slightest evidence that he did so when it mattered and when it was still possible to keep Britain out of the fight. The same applies to the Conservatives, who assume that all wars are automatically right-wing and must be supported on principle. The Tories still suffer from a justified collective guilt about failing to rearm and appeasing Hitler 70 years ago and so are easily cowed by people who accuse them of acting like Neville Chamberlain. With a few brave exceptions, they supported the war and accepted, open-mouthed, the drivel claims that Saddam was a new Hitler, poised for an attack on England, home, and beauty. Many of them joined in the vilification of

the BBC and the Whitehall heresy hunt that followed a correct BBC report that intelligence material had been “sexed up” to suit the government. They then continued to be enthusiasts for the war right up until it began to become unpopular, whereupon they began to have doubts. Yet, while they have to admit that the official case for war was based upon exaggerated and distorted intelligence and that the critics were almost wholly right, they still support the action. And their leader, Michael Howard, continues to do so using reasoning that makes John Kerry’s explanation of his Iraq policy sound simple.

All this has been made much more dangerous for our politicians by the murder in Iraq of a British engineer, Kenneth Bigley. The modern British are a sentimental people, and this event touched them far more than the anonymous carnage that has been going on for months in Baghdad. Bigley’s horrible televised pleas for mercy, while clad in an orange jail jumpsuit and loaded with chains in crude retaliation for the treatment of Muslim prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, aroused much wrath. The grief of his sick and elderly mother created great sympathy. His captors cunningly ensured that the doomed Bigley directed his messages to Blair personally. One of Bigley’s brothers icily accused Blair of having “blood on his hands.” And the British government’s frequent assurances that it would never deal with terrorists were dangerously undermined when it emerged that Blair had authorized contacts with a mysterious intermediary who said he spoke for the kidnappers. What were these contacts for if not negotiation? Until now, opposition to the war has been mainly confined to the sort of people who are actively interested in politics—a noisy minority whose votes are not decisive in most districts. The Bigley tragedy may just mean that the same doubts begin to spread.

If so, Blair is probably still safe. The only party that opposed the war, the Liberal Democrats, is growing mainly thanks to the long decline of the Tories. People vote for them because of what they are not rather than because of what they are, since nobody really knows what they stand for. In a system designed for two parties, three-way voting often has strange results—though by tactical voting the British Left have in recent years cunningly switched their ballots around to do maximum damage to the Tories. Having learned how effective this is, anti-war voters are unlikely to help the pro-war Tories just to spite pro-war Blair, though they will certainly go over to the anti-war Liberal Democrats where they feel safe that they will not help the Conservatives by doing so. The existence of a fourth grouping, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), is likely to make the next election still more complex. UKIP is a fairly incoherent formation, brought into being by the growing realization that the European Union is a threat to British national sovereignty and the justified feeling that the Tories do not understand this. Its leaders include a former daytime TV presenter and its guiding minds include Dick Morris—yes, the Dick Morris who did so much for Bill Clinton. Yet there is no doubt they will steal significant numbers of Tory votes. It was they who pushed the Tories into fourth place in Hartlepool.

Those who remember the days of Margaret Thatcher may find it hard to believe that political opposition in Britain has collapsed so completely. But much of this is her fault. During 12 years in office, she did nothing to combat the Left’s long march through Britain’s institutions. Our schools were turning out Labour and Liberal Democrat voters by the million. Our broadcasting organizations were then confirming them in their generally anti-conservative bias. The

married suburban family, once the strongest social unit in the land, was rapidly being replaced by the unmarried partnership, the single mother, or by serial marriages. Received opinion in modern Britain is universally of the Left. Not only do left-wing adolescents mature into left-wing adults. The children of conservatives generally grow up as liberals. It is as if the Tories had ceased to breed about 35 years ago. Their convention this year was a sad sight, the activists aged and the conference hall half-deserted. The few young conservatives who do exist, courageous and admirable as they are, tend to be eccentric young men with their jacket buttons done up too tight and smeary spectacles. Various unconvincing attempts are made to ingratiate the party with youth or to win the endorsement of rock bands, but nobody is fooled.

Actually Margaret Thatcher and her government had little idea of what they were up against. They thought it was enough to fight the Cold War and the Communist-infiltrated labor unions. They had no understanding of the new turns that revolutionary radicalism had taken in the 1960s and 1970s. They cannot cope with the fact that the new Left cares little about markets and state ownership, and is instead interested in multiculturalism, internationalism, and the sexual revolution. They did not even realize that there could be such a thing as a liberal war. They did not know what hit them when they were tossed out of office in 1997 and they still do not know. And so, in the absence of any kind of coherent conservative party or movement, it is easier by far for the British to punish the opposition than to throw out the government. How long before the birthplace of parliamentary democracy and the rule of law becomes a one-party state? ■

Peter Hitchens is a columnist for the London Mail on Sunday.

Chipping Away

Implantable data chips: good enough for cows

by James Bovard

SEVEN YEARS AGO, Americans laughed at Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh for suspecting that the Army had inserted a microchip into his backside. If McVeigh were still alive (and had not committed mass murder), he could be appearing in television infomercials touting the benefits of the same type of chip he once dreaded.

On Oct. 13, the Food and Drug Administration gave approval to Applied Digital Solutions, a Florida defense contractor, to sell implantable chips (called VeriChips) that may represent a giant leap toward 1984. VeriChips have radio-frequency tags and tiny antennae to allow access to health information and other data merely by passing a scanner over one's body. Each chip has a 16-digit identification number, and medical providers will be able to tap into a database on the Internet to access all of a person's information.

A VeriChip is about the size of a grain of rice and is injected under a person's skin with a syringe. The chip will be practically irremovable—except by the proper authorities. (Remember the scene in the movie "Total Recall" in which Arnold Schwarzenegger used a special tool to do a grisly extraction of the tracking device that had been covertly implanted in his skull?)

Applied Digital CEO Scott Silverman declared that the FDA's approval should help reduce widespread fears and the "creepy factor" surrounding implanted chips. Silverman declared, "We believe there are far fewer people resisting this today." (It is ironic that FDA approval

would reduce public fears, given the FDA's recent debacles with flu shots, Vioxx, and antidepressants.)

The chip is being touted as a simple information device, the same as the chips that have long been imbedded in pets and livestock. If it is good enough for cows, then why not for American citizens?

Like many other recent surveillance initiatives, the VeriChip comes draped in 9/11 sanctimony. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported in August, "VeriChip executives became inspired to use the device on humans after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, when they saw firefighters heading into the twin towers ID-ing themselves by writing on their arms with magic marker." According to Applied Digital's chief technology officer, Keith Bolton, "We then realized that our chip was also a product for the human market."

But Applied Digital was already planning on using chips in humans in 2000. The company's initial rhetoric—such as its claim that people "will be a hybrid of electronic intelligence and our own soul"—set off a firestorm of protests. Christian groups feared the chips would be the mark of the beast warned about in the Book of Revelation. Richard Sullivan, Applied Digital's CEO at the time, told *Fortune* in mid-2001, "I think the term 'implanting' is actually not the correct word. The word is 'participating.'"

But the definition of "participate" radically changed a few months later. Bolton commented after 9/11, "The bottom line is, when people are trying to regain their peace of mind, they're

more open to new approaches." CEO Sullivan advocated that the U.S. inject foreigners visiting America with tracking chips to allow monitoring of their movements by government officials. The Department of Homeland Security recently awarded a contract (worth up to \$10 billion) to another company, Accenture, to develop a system of radio-frequency identification (RFID) chips containing information on foreign visitors. Though the feds are not talking about implanting the chips yet, such a policy becomes far more likely in the event of a second major terrorist attack here. And once implants become obligatory for foreign visitors, it would only be logical to maximize public safety by forcing Americans to "participate."

Technology is rapidly evolving, and a simple information chip could quickly turn into a tracking device. Applied Digital, which is involved in the global positioning satellite communications business, is already providing technology for EZ Pass stickers that allow scanners to read tags on cars that are 30 feet away and driving 20 miles per hour or faster.

It would be naïve to expect that Congress or federal agencies would resist the demands of law enforcement for the chipping of the American people. In 1999, the Federal Communications Commission bowed to FBI demands and required that all new cellular telephones be *de facto* homing devices. Cell phones must now include components that allow law enforcement to determine the precise location of any caller using the device. As *Electronic Design* magazine

noted, "Unlike the location feature being created for 911 emergency services, this capability will apply to all calls and users won't be able to turn it off."

Applied Digital's Silverman was recently asked, "You hear the sound in the background, people saying 'Big brother. Too much information, a little scary.' How do you respond to that?" Silverman replied, "I used to get that question a lot two years ago. Today, we've gotten it a lot less. In fact, the attorney general of Mexico and some of his staff have received this chip for security purposes. And when the acceptance rate of the product goes up significantly like it has, some of the privacy concerns go down."

Mexican law enforcement now supposedly provides the model for American privacy. Mexico's attorney general and his top staffers got chips implanted in their arms to allow restricted access to a room containing computer information on drug cartels and other criminal networks. Mexican law enforcement has been so profoundly corrupted by drugs that the government is now trying the equivalent of a magic wand (or magic scanner) to make its own employees honest. But, as with medieval chastity belts, there will always be ways to get around the most advanced restraints an age can create.

For surveillance technologies, it is often a small step from government approval to government mandates. There is already speculation that the new devices could replace dog tags for U.S. soldiers. Remember how the military raced to court-martial soldiers who refused anthrax vaccinations even though the military deceived troops about the risks of the vaccinations?

Applied Digital is also hyping the use of their chips for police and the military, envisioning that the devices could be installed into gun handles and that the guns' owners would be required to have matching chips inserted into their hands.

Attorney General John Ashcroft is apparently pulling out all the stops in an effort to get the Patriot Act, inclusive of all its current provisions, extended by Congress.

The Patriot Act has a number of sunset clauses that will expire without Congressional action, most of which relate to granting the police and security services powers to conduct secret searches and to access personal records without a court order. The Republican head of the House Judiciary Committee, James Sensenbrenner, who has publicly opposed the "sneak and peek" provisions of the act, has become a principal Ashcroft target. In mid-October Sensenbrenner received a call by two FBI agents, dispatched by Ashcroft, who informed him of charges made by several leading neoconservatives suggesting that he was aiding Islamic bankers who have contributed to terrorist causes. The agents handed Sensenbrenner a research paper prepared by the neoconservatives that made a series of unsubstantiated allegations in an attempt to tie the conservative Republican to Islamist radicals. Key to the charges was a visit made by Sensenbrenner to a Gulf conference of Islamic bankers last April. The paper provided a tortured and inaccurate description of the Islamic Banking Association and would normally be easily dismissed, but the purpose of the visit appears to have been to send a message that all Republican politicians must play ball on the Patriot Act and avoid becoming too close to Muslims and Muslim causes.



Nuclear proliferation issues are not confined to Iran and North Korea, nor are they limited to totalitarian regimes.

Brazil, already believed to be in possession of enough fissionable fuel to produce a half-dozen nuclear weapons, has tentatively agreed to permit its nuclear-fuel plant to be inspected in an attempt to avert international sanctions. Since it began its program, Brazil has claimed that its intent is only to produce fuel for reactors to generate electricity, but it has also cited national-sovereignty issues in its refusal to permit inspection. The United States and other countries have feared that Brazil might be tempted to become the only power with nuclear weapons in South America even though it is not threatened in any way by its neighbors. There is also a danger that fissionable material or weapons developed in Brazil could wind up in the hands of terrorists or unstable countries, as Brazil has a particularly poor record on protecting military technologies. The Brazilian government has conditionally accepted the dispatch of three inspectors from the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Association, though it has warned that it will not allow the inspectors to access any unique or proprietary technology that it has developed. As a more-or-less democracy and a signatory to many international agreements on arms proliferation, Brazil has asked that it be treated "respectfully" in the inspection process, which is presumed to mean that it can declare areas off limits. The United Nations has resisted that request, arguing that a special exception for Brazil could be considered a precedent that would be exploited by nondemocratic countries like Iran and North Korea.

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a partner in Cannistraro Associates, an international security consultancy.

Silverman touted the benefits of such a combination: "It only works with the person it was supposed to work with. If a bad guy tried to turn a police officer's gun on a policeman, it wouldn't work." If the firearm worked in proximity to the hand of the authorized user—and a wrestling match took place between a cop and an assailant—the assailant would still be able to use the cop's gun to shoot him. And many cops will not be keen on the possibility of a computer programmer stepping between them and their ability to defend themselves against attackers.

If police forces begin mandating chip implants in the hands of cops, it is certain that politicians will then try to impose similar burdens on all gun owners. The New Jersey legislature has already passed a law requiring that all guns sold in the state have "smart gun technology" within three years after such technology is available. The Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence (formerly Handgun Control, Inc.) is chomping at the bit. Their spokesman, Rob Wilcox, declared of RFID chips, "This is one of the steps that hasn't been taken and we think this debate is one that needs to take place." But the kind of folks who favor requiring a microchip in the hand before a gun can be fired are usually the sort of folks who don't like to see guns fired.

Americans need to keep a close eye on where the government is going with this draconian new technology. There is no reason to expect the feds to be more honest about tracking chips than they have been about Carnivore, Total Information Awareness, and other intrusions. It is vital that we never permit our rulers to treat all Americans like criminal suspects all the time. The government's incompetence at protecting Americans must not be converted into a political entitlement to destroy all privacy. ■

James Bovard is the author of The Bush Betrayal and seven other books.

What's Yours Is Ours

Bulldozing property rights on behalf of Costco

By Steven Greenhut

MOST AMERICANS LABOR under the delusion that their property is their own, that they are free to run their businesses and live in their homes without molestation from the authorities as long as they work hard and play by the rules. Yet property owners are routinely forced off their land by government authorities brandishing the tool of eminent domain—not to make way for a highway or school but to clear a site for Costco, Wal-Mart, or a car dealership.

In 2002, I received a phone call from property owners in a well-kept neighborhood of tract houses in Garden Grove, an older suburb about 34 miles south of Los Angeles. The middle-class homeowners had received a letter from city officials, and they were confused about the exact meaning of the legal-sounding words.

Titled "Notice of Second Project Area Committee Election and Related Public Meetings," the letter rambled on in unintelligible gibberish, referring to "proposed amendments to the redevelopment plan," "preliminary boundaries," and "added territory." Having watched "redevelopment" at work in the past, I suspected what the neighbors feared—that the city had some new design for the 400 1960s-era tract homes.

Soon afterward, an employee at city hall made a copy of a map drafted by city officials and passed it to a state senator who alerted residents. The map of the neighborhood had these words stamped across it in bold letters: THEME PARK. When word got out, officials claimed that the theme-park idea was

preliminary but finally admitted what was obvious to everyone else.

The city had targeted this nice neighborhood for demolition and was in the process of marketing the property to developers at a discount rate. The goal was to lure a theme park—Garden Grove had long wanted to compete with neighboring Anaheim, home to Disneyland—or some other tax-generating development to the site.

During the battle to save these people's homes, some residents simply would not believe what was happening. This is America, they would say, where such things cannot happen. Unfortunately, they happen thousands of times a year, and rarely do residents fare as well as did those living in the targeted Garden Grove neighborhood.

At the City Council meeting where the plan was discussed, about 1,000 residents showed up, most of them brandishing signs and loudly demanding that the city save their homes. It was one of those eye-opening public meetings. Police and fire unions were there—supporting the plan as a way to bolster the city's budget. Armani-suit-wearing developers and hotel managers showed up and coldly testified to the importance of building a new "attraction" to keep economic development alive in the city.

My favorite desk-pounding moment came when the president of Jamboree Housing, a nonprofit organization that builds low-income housing, supported the demolition of the homes because, according to California redevelopment

law, 20 percent of new property taxes generated in the area would be spent on low-income housing. The organization was arguing that a whole neighborhood of market-rate affordable housing be demolished so that it would receive tax dollars to build subsidized “affordable” housing. Unbelievable.

The shamelessness of the whole process was too much for the assembled homeowners, who angrily interrupted the consultants and developers and government officials who were, in deadpan bureaucratic terms, calling for their homes to be bulldozed. I remember one older woman crying and pleading with the council in Spanish. I don’t speak Spanish but I—and everyone else—understood the words “casa” and “familia.” Ultimately, the council backed down in the face of opposition and voted to remove the neighborhood from the redevelopment plan.

In nearby Cypress, Calif., city officials had voted to condemn a property owned by Cottonwood Christian Center so that it could be transferred to the Darth Vader of eminent domain—Costco, the discount membership warehouse store that has made abuse of property rights part of its corporate practices.

The church had assembled several parcels of land, sandwiched between a race track and an industrial park. The church was planning to spend about \$85 million to build an architect-designed worship center in an area zoned to allow office buildings and which specifically allowed the construction of churches. But city officials became concerned when they realized that the largest open tract of land left in the city would be developed by a church. Churches don’t pay many taxes, officials argued, so they hastily threw together a plan to build a commercial center with Costco as the anchor. They were blunt about their designs: officials wanted more tax revenue for the city. Ironically, the city’s

plan violated the city’s own zoning rules, while the church plan was in perfect conformity with the law.

When the church decided to fight back, City Council members smeared church members as fanatics and depicted the church as a “narrow special interest.” During one council meeting, the mayor argued that the city is like the parents and church members are like children, “who only want what they see.” The meeting recalled C.S. Lewis’s observation: “The greatest evil is not done now in those sordid ‘dens of crime’ that Dickens loved to paint. ... It is conceived and ordered (moved, seconded, carried and minuted) in clean, carpeted, warmed and well-lighted offices, by quiet men with white collars and cut fingernails and smooth-shaven cheeks who do not need to raise their voice.”

That indeed could apply to every eminent domain taking I’ve witnessed. The calm, quiet, professional city managers officially and legally steal the livelihoods of small-business owners and homeowners, who have barely any resources to fight back.

Fortunately, a federal judge smacked down the city of Cypress, arguing that if an increase in tax revenues is all that justifies a taking, then property rights don’t exist in America. Too many other judges have ruled the other way, however. Abuses have continued and have grown more brazen with each passing year. The Garden Grove residents and Cottonwood church members were able to save their properties because their respective cities overreached so far that a backlash occurred and the resulting media, political, and legal pressure forced officials to relent.

When cities decide to pick off small property owners, one or a handful at a time, there is little the victims can do. It’s costly to fight city hall, especially when one’s business is shut down in the process and when owners must pay

attorneys’ fees. Most property owners roll over and accept their fate, just as most victims hand over their wallets when a mugger brandishes a gun.

The Fifth Amendment requires that eminent domain be applied only for a public use, that due process be afforded the victim, and just compensation be paid. The latter two requirements have fared about as well as the public-use requirement. Now Costco is a public use, due process means reading about the taking—in the newspaper—after it has been approved, and just compensation means being offered pennies on the dollar.

Korean immigrants Joseph and Yae Hong built a thriving, \$2 million-a-year car brokerage business in Garden Grove, but when the city drove them off their property it offered only \$16,000 in total compensation because the business was leased. Also in Garden Grove, the city offered a Romanian couple, Daniela and Dionisie Goia, \$640,000 for a business property they had bought seven years earlier for \$778,000 and offered them zero for the business for which they had paid \$100,000.

In both cases, the court dramatically increased the price, but these typical stories show how cities try to lowball businesses when playing the eminent domain game. Ironically, city officials who hand out ridiculously large subsidies to the hotels and chain stores they try to lure become cheap when it comes time to pay up for properties they take by force. All of a sudden, these officials claim to be protecting the taxpayer!

“If you’re going to take property, you have to pay for it,” said John C. Murphy, the attorney who represented the Hongs and Goias. “Instead, Garden Grove runs up attorneys’ fees, and then—and only then—will it pay. ... This may be a good business-litigation strategy. But the city is not dealing with sophisticated litigants, but with small-business owners, who are out of business during the process.”

In Lakewood, Ohio, city officials tried to condemn a lovely park-front neighborhood of historic homes to make way for condos and upscale shopping. To justify the action, they claimed that the homes really were blighted because they lacked central air conditioning and attached garages. Remember that when property is deemed blighted by city officials, the owner can no longer sell it. His life is on hold until the city gets around to redeveloping the land. Sometimes the actual taking is the least abusive part of the deal.

The activist Warren Court in 1954 sparked these abuses by allowing a Washington, D.C. redevelopment plan to proceed even though not all of the taken properties were blighted. The court argued, essentially, that whatever the legislative body says is blight is indeed blight. The Michigan Supreme Court in 1981, in allowing the destruction of the Poletown neighborhood to make way for a General Motors assembly plant, said that blight needn't even be found—the mere promise of economic improvement is good enough reason to obliterate property rights.

That case was finally reversed last July, 23 years later. Now the U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to review *Kelo v. the City of New London*, involving the taking of waterfront properties to make way for a commercial center to serve a new Pfizer facility. If the court doesn't rein in the abuses, more of us will learn the painful lessons inflicted upon residents of Garden Grove, Cypress, Lakewood, and elsewhere: that your property is yours only until Costco or Wal-Mart or some other big company desires it. ■

Steven Greenhut is senior editorial writer and columnist for the Orange County Register and author of the new book Abuse of Power: How the Government Misuses Eminent Domain.

Target: Tehran?

By placing Iran on the Axis of Evil,
Bush made an enemy of a would-be ally.

By Leon Hadar

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a Third World nation in Asia with an ancient and magnificent civilization in which the centers of power were dominated by ideologues resolutely opposed to the values of democracy and who espoused a vicious anti-American agenda. The heads of that rogue regime stirred up hatred towards the U.S. by fueling revolutionary sentiments at home while providing aid to anti-American guerrillas abroad as part of what was regarded as a global ideological confrontation.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the Republican administration and lawmakers of the two major parties, backed by a key lobby representing foreign interests, were promoting a policy that called for overthrowing that anti-American regime and replacing it with one that was friendly to the United States. Indeed, Washington under Democratic and Republican administrations alike had refrained from maintaining a diplomatic relationship with that Asian government and led an international effort to isolate it.

But resisting political pressure, the tough-minded president and his realpolitik foreign-policy advisors decided that, based on American's geopolitical interests, the U.S. had to launch a diplomatic initiative aimed at engaging that Asian adversary. The need to contain common strategic threats and to end a bloody regional war gave birth to a major diplomatic coup that helped strengthen America's international position for years to come ...

This reads very much like the diplomatic opening of China in the early 1970s. But is it possible that in a few years it could also be the way historians will describe changes taking place in the relationship between the U.S. and a Third World country in North Asia, Iran?

Students of International Relations 101 explore that amazing Nixon-goes-to-China chapter in American diplomatic history as a classic example of realpolitik. This school of thought assumes that nations advance their interests vis-à-vis other nations based on a realistic examination of the military, political, and economic balance of power. Governments may disagree over values that drive their respective national politics, but that should not set obstacles on their ability to work together to advance their common interests.

Indeed, according to a historian of the Sino-American relationship, James Mann, Richard Nixon and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, who initiated the opening to Beijing, gave Chinese leaders a clear message that the United States was not going to be involved in China's domestic politics. When China's Chou En-lai tried to talk to Kissinger about the wave of violence (also known as the Cultural Revolution) that radical elements in the Chinese Communist Party were leading, Kissinger said that the United States had no interest in China's affairs at home—and now let's get to the business of battling the Russian Bear.

This is not the kind of response that a member of the Islamist movement that controls Iran would receive from the Bush administration, which seems more committed to idealistic Wilsonian principles than the traditional realistic policies advanced by Nixon and Kissinger. "Our security is not merely found in spheres of influence or some balance of power," President Bush declared about the need to use American power to pursue American ideals—as opposed to hard U.S. interests—during his address to the UN.

At a time when the ideologues in the Bush administration and Congress, encouraged by the powerful Israeli lobby, are calling for another regime change—this time in Tehran as part of a crusade to bring democracy to the region—while the anti-American mullahs are strengthening their hold on power, a U.S.-Iran détente sounds more like science fiction than serious analysis. But the opening of China was conceived and executed in the midst of the Cultural Revolution and when the power of the pro-Taipei lobby was at its height. While demonstrators roaming the streets of Tehran yelling "death to America" enjoy the backing of a powerful element of the regime, one recalls the same type of activists were also a dominating force in China when Kissinger was trying to make a deal.

Elements in the Iranian leadership have been providing assistance to anti-American and anti-Israeli organizations in the Middle East, including insurgents fighting the "Great Satan" (America) in Iraq and terrorists combating the "Little Satan" (Israel) in Lebanon. But the Chinese were also assisting revolutionary guerrilla groups around the world in the 1970s—in Cuba, Vietnam, and Africa—and accusing the Soviets of lacking the same kind of resolve to confront America.

That a hawkish Cold Warrior president was creating the conditions for what amounted to a strategic alliance

with a regime committed to a radical anti-American ideology had to do with calculations of balance of power and national interests. Americans were hoping to exploit the tensions between the elderly leaders of the Soviet Union and China in order to put pressure on Moscow to make concessions on nuclear arms control. Nixon expected that opening China would help improve America's geostrategic position in the aftermath of Vietnam and create an environment that would permit a gradual extraction of U.S. troops from the Southeast Asia quagmire. The Chinese regarded the new relationship as part of a strategy to contain what they perceived as a growing threat from the Soviet Union.

Similar geostrategic calculations should have helped to drive Americans and Iranians into re-evaluating their current relationship—or lack of one—in the aftermath of 9/11 and certainly following the invasion of Iraq. Indeed, both reformers and conservative elements in Tehran were proposing a restoration of relations between the countries. And there were some signs that Washington was flirting with the notion, with realists advocating a more pragmatic approach, ranging from step-by-step "selective engagement" on a few major policy issues to a "grand bargain" that would lead to the re-establishment of normal diplomatic and economic ties.

There is no doubt that the clash-of-civilizations narrative drawn by Americans and Iranians since the 1979 revolution and ensuing seizure of the U.S. diplomats in Tehran in 1980 makes it difficult for both sides to imagine that while they might be dreaming different dreams, they share the same geostrategic bed. They have not had diplomatic relations since 1980, and formal contacts are conducted via the government of Switzerland. Yet they are now close neighbors. To the west, in Afghanistan,

Americans have 13,000 troops. To the east, in Iraq, there are more than 150,000 U.S. troops backed by warships stationed next to Iran's shores. To the north, the Americans are using old Soviet-era bases for forward operations in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.

If an Iranian were using the civilizational frames, the conclusion would be that the American infidels are now encircling the Islamic Republic as part of an imperialist-Zionist plan to defeat Iran and destroy Islam. From an American ideological perspective, the Shi'ite mullahs are perceived as a powerful component of a global radical Islamic threat that challenges American policies in the Middle East and South and Central Asia and threatens to destroy Israel.

But put on realpolitik lenses and things look quite different. It was Iran and not the U.S. that before the 9/11 attacks had been pursuing a policy to bring down the Taliban regime—at a time when U.S. allies Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were backing them. The Iranians were also one of the main supporters of the Northern Alliance guerrillas who helped the Americans take control of Kabul. Iran backed the selection of Karzai as Afghanistan's new president, played a role in the economic reconstruction, and has blocked the flow of heroin out of Afghanistan through Iran.

Just as President Bush was listing Iran—and not the nuclear-equipped exporter of radical Islam, Pakistan—as a member of the Axis of Evil, former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was expressing interest in opening dialogue. But officials in Washington were preoccupied with preparations for war against Iraq and did not show much interest in the overture.

Much has been written about the animosity between Iran and Iraq under Saddam Hussein, which led to one of the bloodiest wars in the region's history,

during which the U.S. tilted toward Iraq. But now America was about to invade Iraq, and MSNBC reported from Tehran, "Officials here say Iran's Islamic leaders could hardly believe their luck." That Washington was "about to do Iran a great service—by taking out the man whose troops, often using chemical weapons, killed more than a half million Iranians during the 1979-89 Iran-Iraq war," is the way any Iranian nationalist would have regarded the U.S. invasion. That is also the way the Shi'ite community in Iraq viewed the ousting of Saddam—not as a step towards democracy but as a win for a repressed ethnic-religious community. Interests—national in the case of the Iranians, ethnic-religious as far as the Iraqi Shi'ites were concerned—and not ideologies, determined the initial positive reactions to the ouster. That the Iraqi Shi'ites have traditionally maintained close links to their co-religionists in Iran presented a unique opportunity to advance U.S. interests in the region, to win two strategic birds—in Baghdad and in Tehran.

THAT THE IRAQI SHI'ITES HAVE **MAINTAINED CLOSE LINKS** TO THEIR CO-RELIGIONISTS IN IRAN PRESENTED A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO **ADVANCE U.S. INTERESTS IN THE REGION**—IN BAGHDAD AND IN TEHRAN.

The U.S. defeat of Iraq has left the Islamic Republic as the strongest regional actor by default. With a population of around 70 million, Iran dwarfs its Arab neighbors to the west and south. Moreover, Americans are worried over the links between members of the Shi'ite majority in Iran and the Shi'ites in Iraq. But a diplomatic détente between Washington and Tehran could have created the conditions for utilizing Iranian influence in Iraq to stabilize that country in a new regional security system that could

have included Turkey and Saudi Arabia. After all, Iran shares with those two states, and the United States, not only a common interest in creating the basis for a pragmatic Shi'ite leadership that would be able to reach a power-sharing agreement with the Sunni minority but also in preventing Iraqi Kurds from trying to promote a Greater Kurdistan.

So it made strategic sense that, in the aftermath of the fall of Baghdad, Tehran would be trying to send rapprochement feelers to Washington. Surprisingly, the overtures were made not by the more moderate reformers associated with President Mohammad Khatami but by emissaries representing the more conservative Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. But that actually made political sense, suggesting that contrary to the conventional wisdom, the conservative forces in Iran—and not the moderates—are in a stronger position to lead a rapprochement with the Americans.

According to several news reports, a senior Iranian official designated by Khamenei to co-ordinate a special com-

mittee on the U.S. relationship transmitted to Washington through Tim Guldimann, the Swiss ambassador to Iran, a proposal for a road map leading to the restoration of relations. The Iranian offer mentioned cutting off support for Hamas and Islamic Jihad and transforming Hezbollah from a guerrilla outlet into a purely political organization.

While the Iranian offer did not lead to a major reassessment of the U.S.-Iranian relationship, it did ignite a debate between realists and neoconservative

hardliners. Leading the realpolitik faction have been former foreign-policy experts such as former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, Thomas Pickering, the former ambassador to the UN, Colin Powell, and his deputy Richard Armitage. Not surprisingly, Donald Rumsfeld and his undersecretary for policy, Douglas Feith, have been opposed, recommending that regime change in Iran become the official U.S. policy and accusing Tehran of being unhelpful over Iraq and harboring al-Qaeda operators. Condoleezza Rice, a former protégé of Scowcroft, and her strategic planner for the Middle East, Robert Blackburn, have rejected Rumsfeld's regime-change proposal, but they have failed to come up with a coherent strategy.

The result has been mixed signals emanating from Washington. After last year's devastating earthquake in Bam, Iran received its first direct American aid in 25 years. There has been talk about sending a U.S. congressional delegation, and Iran's UN ambassador, Muhammad Javad Zarif, has been a frequent visitor to Capitol Hill. But contacts between Washington and Tehran were put on hold while U.S. lawmakers considered legislation on Iran modeled after the Iraq Liberation Act that called for regime change. While the realists, whose position has been supported by the European Union as well as U.S. allies Egypt and Jordan, have stressed the common strategic interests Americans and the Iranians share in Iraq and Afghanistan, the neoconservatives, continuing to promote their ambitious plans to remake the Middle East as part of an alliance with Israel, have been doing their best to sabotage all efforts.

Indeed, immediately after the invasion of Iraq, the neocons, led by ex-CIA spook Reuel Gerecht, Iran-Contra alumnus Michael Ledeen, and war profiteer Richard Perle, were arguing that Iran should be targeted next for a

regime change. Inside the administration, Rumsfeld and Feith were advancing those ideas, suggesting that unlike Iraq, the transformation of Iran could take place peacefully through diplomatic pressure.

"The neocons have this fantasy that they are going to groom this Iranian Lech Walesa, that NED [National Endowment for Democracy] will fund an Iranian 'Solidarity' and before you know it the Iranian Islamic regime, like the Polish Communist government, will implode," a State Department official told me over lunch in March 2004. "They really believe that Iraq will become democratic and serve as a shining model to the Iranian reformers, the so-called domino effect in action, and we are going to have a bunch of pro-American and Internet-surfing Shi'ites in charge in Baghdad and Tehran, the Cool Mullahs."

Like the weapons-for-hostages ("we brought you a cake") plan cooked up by Ledeen and the neocons, the search for an Iranian Walesa and his band of singing ayatollahs has proved to be another pita in the sky. It was Iraq under American occupation, and not Iran, that was imploding and turning into an awful mess while the mullahs, and not the reformers, gained the upper hand in Iran's recent parliamentary elections.

Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons has become the central issue driving the neocon campaign and weakening the realists' position. While there is a consensus in Washington as well as in major European capitals that Iran should not be permitted to develop nuclear military capability, the policy divisions over how to contain that threat mirror the debate on the eve of the invasion of Iraq. Realists seem to agree with the EU's triumvirate of France, Germany, and Britain that warns of a confrontation over the nuclear issue and advocate using diplomatic carrots

to engage Iran, in addition to sticks if Tehran refuses to co-operate with the International Atomic Energy Agency. John Bolton, the undersecretary of state for nonproliferation, is advocating that Iran's lack of co-operation be referred to the UN Security Council for the imposition of sanctions.

But it is unlikely that America's allies in Europe will support such a move or that a confrontational approach would force the Iranians to change their policy. The Iranians deny publicly that they

no choice but to set aside its own ambiguity and declare that it is a nuclear power. That will create a nuclear balance of power in the Middle East between the Jewish and Islamic republics not unlike the one that exists today between the another Muslim theocracy and its Hindu rival on the Indian subcontinent.

No U.S. administration will adopt a policy of encouraging Iran to go nuclear. But the preoccupation with Iran's nuclear goals diverts attention from

LIKE THE **WEAPONS-FOR-HOSTAGES** PLAN COOKED UP BY **LEDEEN AND THE NEOCONS**, THE SEARCH FOR AN IRANIAN WALESA AND HIS BAND OF SINGING AYATOLLAHS HAS PROVED TO BE **ANOTHER PITA IN THE SKY**.

strive for nuclear military capability but seem to be taking steps towards that goal. And as columnist George Will pointed recently, while Iran's regime seems to be committed to fanatical religious doctrines, "its desire for nuclear weapons is not irrational," especially when one considers the dangerous neighborhood, near four nuclear powers—Russia, India, Pakistan, and almost certainly Israel—and the large military presence of another, the infidel United States. As CIA analysts have concluded, when it comes to the need to develop Iran's nuclear program, whose origins go back to the regime of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, the pro-American Shah, there is no disagreement between hardliners and moderates.

Hence the West can try to slow Iran's progress towards developing a nuclear bomb and pray that when it happens—and it will happen, as it did in the cases of China, India, Pakistan, and Israel—the interests of the regime will be more in line with those of Washington. When the Iranians go nuclear, Israel will have

what should be the policy priority of Washington: to make sure that U.S. and Iranian interests become more compatible. When that happens, Washington's attitude towards a nuclear Iran would probably not be different from the one it exhibits toward India, Pakistan, and Israel. If Washington can live with a nuclear bomb in the hands of Pakistan, a military dictatorship and an Islamic theocracy whose leaders had backed the Taliban and had—and may have—links to Osama bin Laden, and who engage in selling WMD, Washington could certainly consider adopting the same approach towards Iran.

The road map to doing business with Iran on the basis of hard American interests—and not through the search for an Iranian Lech Walesa—has been drawn by a task force of the Council on Foreign Relations led by former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and former CIA Director Robert Gates, who both played leading roles in encouraging the emergence of the Solidarity movement. When they conclude in their 79-

page report that despite “considerable political flux and popular dissatisfaction” in Iran, the country “is not on the verge of another revolution” and “those forces that are committed to preserving Iran’s current system remain firmly in control,” they are basically saying, “We knew Lech Walesa. Lech Walesa was a good friend of ours. But there is no Iranian Lech Walesa.”

While they reject the notion of a grand bargain to settle the many differences between the two countries, they propose making “incremental progress on key issues, including regional stability and nuclear issues.” Diplomacy is the only way to resolve the problems between Iran and the U.S., Gates told the press when the report was issued in July. Military action against Iran was “highly unlikely to be attempted, and, if attempted, to be successful.”

Gates and Brzezinski recommend a “direct dialogue on specific issues of regional stabilization” relating to Iraq in the same way that the U.S. has been willing to negotiate with the Iranians on issues relating to the stabilization of Afghanistan. Applying the China analogy, Brzezinski suggested that Washington might offer to sign a “basic statement of principles” similar to the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué that eventually brought about the normalization in 1979. Washington’s goal lies in persuading the Iranians that the two governments can work together to advance their interests in the region. “It’s not a question that we and the Iranians would be sitting down and singing ‘kumbaya’ together,” said Gates, arguing that by improving U.S. ties with Iran, we will be advancing our national interests. ■

Leon Hadar is a Cato Institute research fellow in foreign-policy studies whose book on U.S. policy in the Middle East will be published next year by Palgrave Macmillan.

Disservice to My Son

A Marine father’s lament

by **Leon T. Knauer**

AS A PARENT and former Marine, I was proud of my son Robert’s decision to accept a commission in the U.S. Marine Corps five years ago. Today he is a captain, serving his second tour in Iraq. Our forces continue to perform admirably, but until he comes home, I no longer watch the evening news in the same way.

Shortly before he left for the second time, I joined Robert and a group of his fellow Marines at Chadwick’s, a pub in Georgetown. That night, they seemed like any other young men—boisterous, jocular, well aware of the girls at the bar—but they are so unlike much of their generation. These are our finest, and their families trust that their lives will be risked only when necessary, that they will not be sent shorthanded, and that their morale will be maintained.

In the months since that memorable night, I have concluded that my trust in our political leaders has been misplaced. I love my son. I am proud of the man he has become. But I believe that President Bush and his administration have disserved him and his compatriots in Iraq.

I did not come to these conclusions easily. I am a longtime conservative who supported President Bush in 2000. As an attorney, I defended Republican notables in the Watergate affair and represented the attorney for President Reagan’s Intelligence Oversight Committee in the Iran-Contra hearings. I thus felt parental pride when my son interned with the American Enterprise Institute, the Catholic Campaign for America, and

Sen. Connie Mack (R-Fla.). Robert’s senior treatise was on Edmund Burke, he was editor of the conservative paper at Holy Cross, and the conservative advocate on the campus radio program “Holy Cross Fire.” Like father, like son. Now I do not know what to tell him. The Republican Party has lost its bearings, and the Democrats have not offered an appealing alternative. I did not vote for the re-election of President Bush.

A number of Americans believe that the war with Iraq was unnecessary, and an even greater number believe that the reconstruction effort has been handled poorly. That is history. The critical question is what we should do now.

Do we have a sufficient number of adequately trained troops to meet our needs? Fortunately, most military leaders have not expressed their views on this subject. Had they done so, it would have been at the risk of being relieved, thereby depriving my son and his compatriots of the most capable commanders. But respected military leaders no longer in positions of authority, including retired Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni, have been outspoken in their criticism of the Department of Defense for failing to have enough trained troops and replacements. Indeed, Zinni believes that we would be better served if Rumsfeld were removed. Re-enlistment is down, recruitment has become difficult, and we are compensating by recycling already overextended personnel.

More specifically, Marine units are being sent to Iraq before completing their training cycles. The normal state-

side rotation of some units may be reduced from 12 months to six. Artillery personnel may be transferred to infantry units—which means that artillery units will not be available should the need arise. And those serving in Iraq may have their combat tours extended.

During the campaign, President Bush discounted our troop shortage and asserted that the Iraqi militia would soon replace our military. Senator Kerry acknowledged our troop shortage and suggested increasing the number of active-duty personnel. Neither candidate had the political courage to suggest reintroducing the draft because that would have run the risk of losing votes. According to the Bush administration, we are in an all-out war against terrorism. Yet few in our society are feeling any pain. Few are really participating in this war. If the draft is not a viable option, we are clearly not committed and should prepare for an orderly withdrawal.

Each day the media shows faces of young people killed in Iraq. In past wars, the families of our political leaders—Presidents Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Johnson—actively participated. It would thus be enlightening if the growing casualty list were accompanied by a chart that named the sons, daughters, and other relatives of Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and other administration officials who are serving in the military. If the number is substantial, it would boost morale and establish that our leaders are willing to make the same sacrifice they ask of fathers like me. And if, as I believe, the number is small or even nonexistent, the terrorists would be justified in concluding that the commitment of our leaders is not serious.

I did not discuss this article with my son because I did not want to compromise his obligations as an officer. Robert, however, expressed his views in a limited way in an interview in Yusufiya, Iraq

with a reporter for the *New York Times* last month: “The enduring optimism of many American troops was summed up by Capt. Rob Knauer of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, who emphasized the need to train Iraqis to do the house-to-house operations in the long run. ‘We can win a war this way,’ he said.”

Robert’s optimism is evidence of his determination to achieve this objective, but he needs help. Right now, the Iraqi militia is an illusion, or perhaps more appropriately a mirage. Training a formidable Iraqi militia will take time, and Iraqis will want to join only if they have something to protect—the ability to have basic necessities, to educate their children, to lead secure lives. President Bush’s insistence notwithstanding, an Iraqi militia will not be the answer to our troop shortage problem for some time. My son did not say otherwise.

At present, our military is required to co-ordinate with the Iraqi interim government, which was created in haste to give the appearance of a representative government. But this three-headed camel—the U.S. administration, the interim government, and our military—has undermined efficiency and morale. The observation of Marine Lt. Gen. James Conway, who recently completed his tour as commander of the First Marine Expeditionary Force, is a case in point. General Conway’s warnings about the dangers of attacking Fallujah were ignored and, despite his protests, the attack was aborted at midpoint. This political oversight restricted flexibility and brought back memories of Lebanon, where 241 Marines, soldiers, and sailors were killed in a military operation overmanaged by politicians.

Most Americans assumed that the reconstruction of Iraq would be handled with the usual U.S. efficiency in a country where, we were advised, citizens would welcome us and assist in our effort. Unfortunately, corruption

has become common—one has to pay a \$500 bribe to get a visa—many contractors are more concerned about excess profit than getting the job done, and Iraqis interested in participating are confronted with miles of red tape. I am unable to offer a solution. That is beyond my competence. But I did not launch an invasion without a plan for peace, then fail to admit error and seek help.

Compounding these hardships—insufficient troop strength and training, lack of commitment at home, political meddling, and bungled reconstruction—our troops face an additional obstacle that the American political establishment won’t even discuss. While I believe that the territorial integrity of Israel should be guaranteed, I also believe, as do many citizens of Israel, that an independent Palestine is not possible if thousands of invaders occupy strategic locations in this emerging nation. After siding with the Sharon government, how could we send our Marines and soldiers to a Muslim country and expect them to be greeted as disciples of democracy rather than implementers of Israeli expansion?

As a proud American, a veteran, and the father of a young man whose life is on the line, I am deeply distressed. My plea is probably a futile one. Our political leaders seem to lack the moral fiber to admit these problems, much less discuss how they might be corrected. But just as my son has a duty to serve, his country has a reciprocal obligation to ensure that he has what he needs to fulfill his mission. That expectation belongs not just to him, but to parents like me who have given the best we have and now count the days until they come home. ■

Leon T. Knauer is a Washington, D.C. attorney and former Marine officer.

Arts & Letters

FILM

[Alfie]

What's It All About?

By Steve Sailer

THE SIXTIES DIDN'T HAPPEN until the Seventies in the movie business (because studios never trust anybody under 30 to make expensive features), so film critics have tended to disregard that decade, but I prefer the unhipness of Sixties movies, made by a hardier, less self-indulgent generation.

Lately, the industry has been demonstrating the sincerest form of flattery by remaking a raft of Sixties films, such as "The Manchurian Candidate," "The Alamo," "Planet of the Apes," and "The In-Laws"—with almost uniformly dire results.

This genre's only success was last year's nifty updating of the Michael Caine heist flick "The Italian Job," so it was predictable that Caine's trademark film, the 1966 comedy-drama "Alfie," about a womanizing Cockney chauffeur, would be redone. As Canadian commentator Colby Cosh has noted, Hollywood believes "The public adores the familiar, even if all they know is that it should be familiar," and anybody who has ever set foot in a piano bar has that catchy Bacharach-David line "What's it all about, Alfie?" tattooed to his gray matter.

Jude Law, the cute young Englishman who is in six movies this autumn,

replaces Caine as the cad who slowly learns he should have acted like a dad, but incompatibilities quickly surface. Caine was 33, a Korean combat veteran, 6'-2," and every inch a man. With his bulging Adam's apple and pop eyes, Caine's Alfie was a tad funny looking, but his cast-iron confidence made him irresistible. In Alfie's many asides spoken directly to the camera, Caine's rather flat affect was ultimately less tiresome than Law's attempts to charm and seduce. In short, Caine addressed the men in the audience, Law the women.

Law is 31, but he seems callow in comparison, which squanders the purportedly devastating blow to Alfie's pride at the end. In the original, when Alfie called on a wealthy and salacious widow (Shelly Winters) with whom he has been dallying, he found a longhaired electric guitarist in her bed. Caine's Alfie, an old-fashioned beer-and-skittles bloke who wouldn't know The Who from Carnaby Street, plaintively asked, "What's he got that I don't?" She replied, "He's younger than you, Alfie." That line seems absurd, though, when Susan Sarandon drops it on the dewy-cheeked Law. Worse, the famous generation gap that might have excited a jaded matron in 1966 hardly exists anymore.

Stylistically, the new version can't seem to make up its mind whether it's set in the Swinging London of 1966 or the Manhattan of 2004. Girls in go-go boots with ironed-straight blonde hair and kohl-rimmed eyes chat on cell phones. To add to the nostalgic confusion, Mick Jagger was hired to write the score. Mick keeps alive his streak of not having penned a good song since "Start Me Up" in 1981.

Changes in the script mostly dissipate the elemental power of the original. The

cad vs. dad distinction (first named by anthropologist Henry Harpending in 1982) had been underlined by the first version's subplot where Alfie's stand-by girlfriend, whom he wouldn't marry or support even though she'd given him a beloved son, wedded an unsexy bus conductor because he'd promised to provide for her little boy. Two years later, a despondent Alfie chanced upon the happy family at the christening of their second child.

But Law's Alfie isn't even the father of Marisa Tomei's little boy, and when she eventually dumps him, it's for a guy who is so cool looking that he could be the bass player for The Strokes.

Even worse is the loss of the famous climax that shattered, at least temporarily, Alfie's regal self-assurance. After he'd impregnated a sick friend's wife, he hired an illegal abortionist to induce her to deliver a stillbirth in his apartment. Returning home later, the camera focuses in on his trembling face as he found, we later learn, the dead body of his tiny but perfectly formed child.

Forty million legal abortions later, no Hollywood movie would dare drive home the reality of abortion so powerfully. So Law's Alfie merely chauffeurs his pal's girlfriend to the clinic, where, predictably, she decides not to have the abortion. In today's films, almost nobody ever actually has an abortion. See, everybody in Hollywood is pro-choice, but being pro-choice isn't about having abortions, it's about, like, the abstract, metaphysical concept of choice, you know.

Okay, sure, whatever ... but it makes for a forgettable movie. ■

Rated R for sexual content, some language and drug use.

BOOKS

[*Chain of Command: The Road From 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*, Seymour Hersh, HarperCollins, 393 pages]

How We Got to Abu Ghraib

By Justin Raimondo

OF ALL THE CRITICAL analyses of Seymour Hersh's latest book, the best and most telling review appeared before *Chain of Command* came off the press. The Pentagon press office, in a pre-emptive strike designed to neutralize a blow they knew was coming, had this to say:

Based on media inquiries, it appears that Mr. Seymour Hersh's upcoming book apparently contains many of the numerous unsubstantiated allegations and inaccuracies which he has made in the past based upon unnamed sources.

The release goes on to claim that it was the Department of Defense, "and not Mr. Hersh," that "first publicized the facts of the abuses at Abu Ghraib"—a complete fiction. The reality is that it was a lone military policeman, Specialist Joseph M. Darby, who exposed the horrors of Abu Ghraib and without whom it would still be a giant sore festering in the darkness. It was Hersh who broke this story and first exposed the details—and origins—of what the government claims was an isolated incident. As Hersh shows, what happened at Abu Ghraib was part and parcel of a larger plan, the work of a secret army of assassins and torturers designed to break the back of the Iraqi insurgency.

That the Pentagon is especially bitter about all those "unnamed sources" is understandable, given that so many of them originated within its own walls. Hersh gives voice to the complaints of

the anti-neocon military, who are chafing under the Napoleonic delusions of the civilians who dragged us into war and are bitter about the increasingly bloody consequences. Readers of this book will not have been surprised by the news that a platoon of soldiers in Iraq recently mutinied, refusing to transport fuel shipments in inadequately armored vehicles without armed escort. *Chain of Command* gives a full accounting of the frantic rush to war engineered by Rumsfeld and his neocon Praetorian Guard, who disdained traditional military doctrine and threw away the rulebook when it came to Iraq. Hersh writes, "According to the dozen or so military men I spoke to, Rumsfeld simply failed to anticipate the consequences of protracted warfare. He put Army and Marine units in the field with few reserves and an insufficient number of tanks and other armored vehicles."

As the consequences of Rumsfeld's fateful decision continue to roll in, this book could not have come at a better time. It gives us an overview of the war's dark underside, a periscopic perspective on the depths to which our leaders have sunk in their obsessive quest to remake the Middle East into a pile of "democratic" rubble.

The rush to war is explained, in this riveting and fast-moving account, by the War Party's justified fear that the elaborate structure of lies on which the case for invasion was built would fly apart at any moment. Saddam's tenuous-to-the-point-of-nonexistent links to al-Qaeda, the weapons of mass destruction, the outright forgeries that were the sole support of this administration's constant evocations of a nuclear Iraq about to conjure mushroom clouds over American cities—it was all a complex web of lies. Woven by imaginative Iraqi exiles and cast over the White House by neoconservative operatives in the vice president's office and Douglas Feith's policy shop, the whole fabric of this fiction was expertly embroidered by the Office of Special Plans, which was special in the sense that it specialized in the manufacture of lies: George W. Bush's Ministry of Truth.

While Hersh is credited for having exposed the Abu Ghraib prison abuse to begin with, less well known is his reporting on the origins of this blot on the American conscience. It wasn't an aberration, as the Pentagon would have it, but a "special-access program"—a top-secret operation, dubbed "Copper Green" by its authors, in which Special Forces and others comprised a secret army charged with targeting presumed enemies in the War on Terror. One official familiar with the program described its operative principle as "Grab whom you must. Do what you want."

Initially limited to Afghanistan and the manhunt for Osama bin Laden and his associates, the program soon branched out to include the war against Iraq's guerrilla insurgency. Describing the import of legal documents drawn up by Pentagon lawyers to justify the "Gitmoization" of Iraq's prison system, Hersh cites Anthony Lewis saying that the memos "read like the advice of a mob lawyer to a mafia don on how to skirt the law and stay out of prison."

The generals and their civilian enablers in the top echelons of the Pentagon may stay out of jail—although that remains to be seen—but the back-country boys and girls caught up in the scandal are getting the book thrown at them. Hersh clearly sees them as scapegoats: he documents that they were encouraged and on occasion ordered to engage in the abuse that became routine at Abu Ghraib and other prisons, including in Afghanistan. Military intelligence, private contractors, and especially Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, the Guantanamo commander, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, and hardcore neocon Stephen Cambone, undersecretary of defense for intelligence, all had a direct hand in creating the hothouse conditions under which the dark bloom of Abu Ghraib sprouted and flourished.

In late August 2003, General Miller issued a report recommending that the Iraq prison system be "Gitmoized," and geared to extracting intelligence from prisoners. The rising insurgency was taking an increasingly heavy toll in

terms of American casualties and Bush's political viability, and the pressure was on to produce results. At the Senate hearings on Abu Ghraib, General Sanchez—named by *Hispanic* magazine as 2004's "Hispanic of the Year"—denied authorizing the unleashing of dogs on prisoners, but Hersh notes that two months later *USA Today* cited classified documents showing Sanchez had issued orders approving the use of dogs at the interrogators' discretion. Sanchez, by the way, is up for a promotion. According to reports, Rumsfeld and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard Myers, are bound and determined to pin a fourth star on General Sanchez.

It is Cambone, however, who appears to be at the center of the Abu Ghraib—"Copper Green" morass. It was he, after all, who seized control of all special-access programs, and no one was closer to Rumsfeld: the secretary of defense left the details to his trusted accomplice. As one wag put it, "Whatever Rumsfeld whimsically says, Cambone will do ten times that much."

Once legitimized torture was established at Guantanamo, the Gitmoization of the Iraqi and Afghan prisons was only a matter of time. Having set up the apparatus of catch, snatch, and summarily dispatch, in pursuit of the ever-morphing al-Qaeda, it wasn't long before Rumsfeld's international army of assassins was deployed against the Iraqi resistance. The gang that told us that the post-9/11 era meant that the old rules no longer applied had come up with a military doctrine of imperial pre-emption: a claim to absolute righteousness that implied the privilege of prosecuting a War on Terror by any means necessary.

The Pentagon disdains Hersh's unnamed sources, but how else is a whistleblower to get word out of abuses,

especially in the military? In any case, Hersh's sources are very often specifically identified beyond "a CIA officer," or "a State Department analyst." He cites "one officer, who plays an important role in the difficult-to-prosecute war against the insurgents in Iraq," as saying that he found out about the abuse in November 2003 and "took that information to two of his superiors, General Abizaid, the CENTCOM commander, and his deputy, Air Force Lieutenant General Lance Smith. 'I said there are systematic abuses going on in the prisons,' the officer told me. 'Abizaid just didn't say a thing. He looked at me—beyond me, as if to say, 'Move on. I don't want to touch this.'" Smith also said nothing. "They knew last year," the officer told me."

Of particular interest is the chapter on the Niger uranium forgeries—the cache of documents that the U.S. government relied on as evidence of Saddam's attempt to procure uranium "yellowcake" from Africa. This became the basis of a concerted propaganda campaign culminating in the president's 2003 State of the Union address, in which the allegation was repeated without mentioning any specifics. That the documents were so quickly exposed as forgeries—and crude ones, at that—has led to questions about how something so obviously bogus got into the U.S. intelligence stream, making it all the way up to the White House. Was George W. Bush lied to, or was he doing the lying himself? The evidence gathered by Hersh clearly points to the former: the CIA, it turns out, had the documents and waited for the International Atomic Energy Agency to debunk them.

The section entitled "Into the Intelligence Stovepipe" gives us a fascinating glimpse into how the intelligence-gathering process was hijacked and utilized to advance the War Party's aims. "They call themselves, self-mockingly, the Cabal," writes Hersh—just the sort of humor one might expect from students of Leo Strauss. Both Paul Wolfowitz and Office of Special Plans chief Abram Shulsky studied under the "philosopher of the noble lie," as he is sometimes

called. Strauss believed that only an elite could be entrusted with the truth, while the less enlightened masses had to be content with comforting lies. In an essay co-authored with neocon publicist Gary Schmitt on the application of Strauss's ideas on esoteric knowledge to the craft of intelligence, Shulsky contends that Straussian thought "alerts one to the possibility that political life may be closely linked to deception. Indeed, it suggests that deception is the norm in political life."

Deception is certainly the norm for this administration: operating in secret, denying all culpability, refusing to admit the monstrous visions of mushroom clouds were based on a lie. The self-described "cabal" that lured us into war operated in the dark, without congressional or much journalistic oversight. When Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz wanted to create parallel intelligence-gathering agencies and military formations, they simply did so, without having to answer to anyone.

"Secrecy and wishful thinking" are words a Pentagon official cited herein uses to describe Rumsfeld's Pentagon, and that sums up the credo of the Bush presidency. But how did it come to this? Hersh ponders

Some of the most important questions are not even being asked. How did they do it? How did eight or nine neoconservatives who believed that a war in Iraq was the answer to international terrorism get their way? How did they redirect the government and rearrange long-standing American priorities and policies with so much ease? How did they overcome the bureaucracy, intimidate the press, mislead the Congress, and dominate the military? Is our democracy that fragile?

Here is a story that cries out to be written, and God help the neocons if Hersh decides to write it. ■

Justin Raimondo is editorial director of Antiwar.com

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[*America's Right Turn: How Conservatives Used New and Alternative Media to Take Power*, Richard A. Viguerie and David Franke, Bonus Books, 375 pages]

Road Map of the Right

By Daniel J. Flynn

America's Right Turn is a book in which such seldom uttered phrases as "Bricker Amendment" and "Who Promoted Peress?" again stir passions. Long forgotten controversies that today serve as answers to trivia questions are resurrected by authors Richard Viguerie and David Franke. Readers with an interest in American conservatism past and present will be grateful for this.

The book is as much a history of the conservative movement as it is a lesson in how the Right successfully generated interest in its ideas by bypassing traditional media outlets. The two things, after all, go hand in hand. If conservatives relied on the mainstream media to get their message out, there would be no movement. Viguerie and Franke trace organized conservatism's roots to the years following World War II. Acknowledging scattered rightist activity during the Roosevelt years, the authors note, "A lot of grumbling does not a movement make."

Unlike many other books on postwar conservatism, *America's Right Turn* places an emphasis on the New Right with which Viguerie was closely identified. (Franke, for his part, has been part of the movement since 1958, when he started the Student Committee for the Loyalty Oath.) Perhaps because of the dearth of intellectuals associated with them, the activist-oriented New Right gets short shrift from the scholars who chronicle postwar American conservatism. So what, if anything, made the Right that emerged in the 1970s "new"? "It's true that the Old Right had emphasized economic

issues and anti-communism while the New Right added social issues to the mix, but there really wasn't much outright *disagreement* between the two groups on issues," the authors contend. "Their key differences were in temperament and operational style—in short, they implemented different types of activism."

The New Right didn't just differ from the Old Right. Juxtaposing the New Right with current leaders who conflate conservatism with the Republican Party, Viguerie and Franke write, "New Right leaders thought of *themselves*—not the Republican Party—as the alternative to the Left and the Democrats." More doers than thinkers, the vanguard of the New Right included Equal Rights Amendment slayer Phyllis Schlafly, Free Congress Foundation Chairman Paul Weyrich, and Leadership Institute founder Morton Blackwell, as well as Viguerie himself. Much of the alternative media discussed in the book, particularly direct mail, was pioneered or used to greatest effect by the New Right.

"Conservatives turned to alternative media because the establishment media were closed to them," the authors note. By necessity, the Right created its own institutions—*Human Events* and *National Review*, Regnery and Arling-

Call It Treason, and Phyllis Schlafly's *A Choice Not an Echo*, million-plus sellers all, were initially published in Shepherdsville, Kentucky, Florissant, Missouri, and Alton, Illinois—not exactly Meccas of the book industry. More high-brow titles, such as F.A. Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*, received multiple rejection letters before finding a publisher. Because political concerns trumped dollar signs in the publishing industry—a phenomenon that still occurs, most conspicuously with the rejection of Ann Coulter's blockbuster *Slander* by its original publisher—conservatives were compelled to build a press of their own outside of the mainstream publishing industry.

Political direct mail, a field Viguerie dominated in the 1960s and '70s, allowed conservatives to reach the masses with their message without relying on the mainstream media. It also gave conservatives a means to raise money outside of traditional Republican Party circles. "With this independence, conservatives could concentrate on advancing the conservative agenda rather than the Republican agenda," Viguerie and Franke write. The authors cite the late '70s uproar over the Panama Canal Treaty, an agreement much of the GOP hierarchy supported but conserva-

BEING REMINDED OF **PAST REBELLIONS AGAINST THE REPUBLICAN PARTY**, FROM THE CURRENT VANTAGE POINT OF **PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS** AND BACKDOOR **SCHEMES TO GRANT AMNESTY**, IS ENOUGH TO MAKE THE READER **PINE FOR THE 1970S**.

ton House, Young Americans for Freedom and New York's Conservative Party—to disseminate its message when existing institutions balked. Alternative publishing, direct mail, talk radio, and now the Internet are the tools that have propelled the postwar Right to political and cultural potency.

In the early days of the conservative movement, the message from New York-based publishers was clear: no right-of-center authors need apply. Consider that Barry Goldwater's *Conscience of a Conservative*, John Stormer's *None Dare*

tives opposed, as an example of how activists on the Right did an end-run around the party's fundraising apparatus—albeit in a failed effort. Being reminded of such past rebellions against the Republican Party, from the current vantage point of prescription drug plans and backdoor schemes to grant amnesty for illegal aliens, is almost enough to make the reader pine for the 1970s.

America's Right Turn, despite being coauthored by a well-known direct-mail guru, acknowledges that postal fundraising has been "both a blessing

and a curse." The authors concede that it "has allowed a lot of conservative leaders to reign as armchair generals," while providing a sense of fulfilled obligations from citizens who send in checks but do little else to advance their principles. But for better or worse, the Right is wedded to direct mail. To this day, "direct mail remains the foremost communication tool for conservative activists," the authors contend.

Franke and Viguerie trace the rise of talk radio to the abolition of the Fairness Doctrine by the Reagan administration. The rule, put into place by President Harry Truman's Federal Communications Commission, ensured that the government and not the market would determine what political ideas and opinions would be voiced over the airwaves. Rather than risk stiff penalties by running afoul of an FCC bureaucrat's conception of equal time, radio stations generally ran innocuous, boring political commentary—if they delved into politics at all. All of that changed in the 1980s when the Reagan administration determined that the Fairness Doctrine, instituted by a regulatory body and not

on the Web each have a larger online audience than such print titans as the *Financial Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Daily News*, or *Time* magazine." The Drudge Report, perhaps more iconoclastic than conservative, has more daily readers than any one of the network newscasts has viewers. Political fundraisers as well as celebrated gadflies have found the Internet useful. The authors point out that on-line donors tend to be more than a decade younger than direct-mail donors and that Web donors make substantially larger contributions on average. The successful attempt to recall Gray Davis as governor of California, as well as the ongoing effort to recall Dan Rather as anchorman of CBS Evening News, demonstrates the growing power of the Internet to uproot entrenched power.

America's Right Turn hit stores at roughly the same time as the Rathergate scandal, which provides a fitting postscript to the book. Behaving as if it were 1974 instead of 2004, Dan Rather arrogantly dismissed his critics in the blogosphere as "partisan political operatives." The remark seemed as much

But have conservatives, as the book's subtitle suggests, really taken power? Publishing-industry heavyweights Random House and Penguin now boast conservative imprints, right-leaning voices dominate talk radio, and, at least according to the authors, conservatives even have their own television network in the Fox News Channel. The party of most conservatives, too, enjoys great success. The GOP has lately controlled both houses of Congress, the White House, and the majority of governorships, with Republican presidents having appointed seven of the nine justices currently on the Supreme Court. But what have conservatives to show for all this?

The era of big government, declared dead by Bill Clinton, has been brought back to life by his successor—both at home and abroad. Ironically or not, the Republican zenith coincides with the conservative nadir. "Conservative" the word has never been so popular. The principles traditionally associated with that word have never been so peripheral. Making conservatism popular has clearly come at the price of making conservatism more liberal.

Conservatives have not taken power after all, but a blueprint to do so is within the pages of this book. Part how-to guide, part chronicle of the conservative movement, *America's Right Turn* takes stock of where the Right has been and outlines how the Right might arrive at where it wants to go. Viguerie and Franke lament the movement's present degraded state but remain optimistic. "Conservatives will find their voice and their heritage once again," *America's Right Turn* concludes. They will do so with the alternative-media infrastructure created over the last half-century, and they will do so "not as blind follow-the-leader partisans, but as principled and independent conservatives." ■

Daniel J. Flynn is the author of Intellectual Morons: How Ideology Makes Smart People Fall for Stupid Ideas (Crown Forum, 2004).

THE ERA OF BIG GOVERNMENT, DECLARED DEAD BY BILL CLINTON, HAS BEEN BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE BY HIS SUCCESSOR—BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD. IRONICALLY OR NOT, THE REPUBLICAN ZENITH COINCIDES WITH THE CONSERVATIVE NADIR.

Congress, was not even law. The courts agreed. "In a brief six years, over a thousand radio stations had switched to a talk-radio format—because that's what their listeners wanted," the authors explain. The change made possible the rise of Rush Limbaugh, as well as such big-city talkers as Boston's Howie Carr, Philadelphia's Michael Smerconish, and Los Angeles's Al Rantel.

More recently, the emergence of the Internet has provided an effective tool for conservatives. It has also dissipated the power of traditional media. According to Viguerie and Franke, "The top four conservative and libertarian sites

projection as a way to avoid the substance of the charge made by the bloggers that documents used by CBS suggesting favorable treatment for President Bush in the Texas Air National Guard were a hoax. Thirty years ago (perhaps even ten years ago), CBS could have gotten away with relying on forged documents for a major story. But the big three broadcast-news divisions no longer wield the power they once did. More importantly, alternative media are too far reaching to dismiss casually. Acting as if these new media simply are not there does not make them go away. CBS found this out the hard way.

[*How Capitalism Saved America: The Untold Story of Our Country From the Pilgrims To the Present*, Thomas J. DiLorenzo, Crown Forum, 285 pages]

To Market, To Market

By R. Cort Kirkwood

FROM JAMESTOWN and Plymouth Rock through Clay's "American System" to Hoover's interventionism and Roosevelt's raw deal, *How Capitalism Saved America* records America's failed socialist and mercantilist experiments. Thomas DiLorenzo, an economics professor at Loyola College in Baltimore, Md., decodes American economics not with imperspicuous formulae but with entertaining, painless prose.

First, he provides a primer on economics. Citing Adam Smith, DiLorenzo explains that three of capitalism's defining elements, in addition to property rights, are the "division of labor, social cooperation and free exchange." The last enables us to "provide our fellow man with better and better (and less expensive) goods and services in return for money."

But while such an economy involves serving one's community, the free market does not depend on altruism or man's goodwill to his fellow man. "Cattle ranchers in Montana," writes DiLorenzo, "rise at 4 a.m. and work until well after dark ... not out of love for their fellow men but because they want to earn a living for themselves and their families." Capitalism "captures this motivation and channels it in a way that encourages human cooperation."

This is made possible, DiLorenzo contends, by property rights, which "are the keystone of modern capitalism and civilization itself." That's stretching it a bit, but the point and theme of the book is clear: government destroys wealth; the free market creates it. "Free market prices," DiLorenzo avers, "are the only

viable means of rational economic calculation."

Noting that egalitarianism is a "revolt against human nature," he offers a smorgasbord of preposterous quotes from economists enamored of communism, particularly of the Soviet variety. Quaker D.F. Buxton thought "the Communist view of human nature ... [was] far more inspired by Faith, Hope and Charity than our own." He lauded communism's "sense of moral advance," and "spirit of service," while John Dewey, avatar of government education, called the Reds "intrinsically religious" people who demonstrated the "moving spirit and force of primitive Christianity." And Franklin Roosevelt's chief economic advisor, a university nawab, was ever gushing over Joseph Stalin's murderocracy.

After providing these outlines of capitalism and the anti-capitalist mentality, DiLorenzo begins his chronicle proper. He starts with Jamestown, the first English settlement in America. The story he tells is markedly different from grammar-school history. Landing in 1607, 104 hardy Virginia Company settlers, led by Christopher Newport and John Smith, set up camp on the small island. Within six months, in a land of plenty, 66 were dead of famine. Another 500 landed two years later, and again, within six months, 400 were dead from starvation and disease. The survivors were reduced to cannibalism. This episode became known as the "starving time," and the problem, settlers concluded, "was a want of providence, industrie and government, and not the barrenesse and defect of the Countre."

Why a "want of ... industrie"? Because "all of the men," DiLorenzo reminds us, "were indentured servants who had no financial stake in the fruits of their own labor." They did not own the land they tilled or the goods they produced, and their wares went to a common store. In 1611, Britain sent a new high marshal, who quickly gave each man three acres of land and required no more than one month's work toward to the common treasury of food and supplies. Prosperity followed.

The Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock repeated Jamestown's errors and rectified them the same way. The point? Communism failed here before it failed in the Soviet Union. Yet the urge to collectivize springs eternal in the human breast. After what DiLorenzo calls America's Capitalist Revolt, meaning the American War for Independence, Alexander Hamilton and his disciples began their crusade to centralize control of the American economy. Their efforts bore fruit in Henry Clay. Aside from trying to ship blacks back to Africa, Clay spent a career proselytizing his "American System" of massive public works and corporate subsidies. His leading apostle was Lincoln.

The American System plundered taxpayers to enrich the business friends of Clay, Lincoln, and the rest of those incipient Republicans, the Whigs. The subsidized Union and Central Pacific railroads, which politically connected businessmen built at exorbitant costs with land deeded by Congress, were the zenith of their success. DiLorenzo spotlights this pack of thieves by contrasting them with James J. Hill, who built his Great Northern Railroad the old-fashioned way. He used private money and purchased every piece of land required to lay track. As well, while Hill's subsidized competitors took the longest route between two points to line their pockets with taxpayer money, Hill took the shortest. While Hill prospered, his competitors collapsed into the Credit Mobilier scandal and bankruptcy. Most railroad tycoons were not capitalists, as the historians tell us, but political pirates living on corporate welfare.

DiLorenzo is at his best when dissecting the hallowed myths about antitrust laws, the Great Depression, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Contrary to legend, John D. Rockefeller once was the best friend consumers had. His Standard Oil was so efficient that it cut the cost of refining a gallon of oil from three cents in 1869 to half a cent by 1885. Concomitantly, the price of refined oil dropped from 30 to 8 cents per gallon. Unsurprisingly,

Rockefeller's success inspired his enemies to vilify him.

Most notable was Ida Tarbell, a writer whose brother worked for one of Rockefeller's competitors. She penned a book that denounced Rockefeller, his alleged monopoly, and predatory pricing. As economics goes, much of the story was mendacity and moonshine, but such never stopped a crusading journalist or rent-seeking politician. Standard Oil was dismantled, and free enterprise was shackled to a Procrustean bed of antitrust laws that harmed consumers and sent the trusts running for lawyers and lobbyists.

Antitrust law "literally destroyed" Pan-American airlines, DiLorenzo argues, which was hardly a boon to consumers or an improvement in air travel. More recently, it nearly ensnared Bill Gates and Microsoft. The software magnate's so-called victims were competitors belly-aching about his business practices. Eventually, federal gumshoes stepped in, ever ready to smash a successful businessman. Gates prevailed against what

turned out to be an open conspiracy among competitors to use the government to "decapitate Microsoft."

What the public never heard about Gates, however, is similar to what it never heard about Rockefeller. Where Gates dominated a market, products were better and prices fell. Standard Oil was not and Microsoft is not a true monopoly, which can exist only when government, using laws that give one company a sole franchise or competitive edge over another, stifles or arrests competition. Gallingly, Uncle Sam routinely does what businessmen cannot—that is, creating cartels and monopolies that use real predatory pricing to enrich politically connected businesses.

DiLorenzo next gores a bigger, more sacred ox: the notion that Roosevelt saved us from the supposedly unfettered or dog-eat-dog capitalism that launched the Depression. The truth is quite the opposite. Herbert Hoover's ham-handed, socialist intervention, deficit spending, and tax increases, not free-market capitalism, caused the Depression. Hoover's spending on public works in 1931, DiLorenzo reports, was as high as at any other point that decade, even considering Roosevelt's hiring of some 10 million bureaucrats to staff his acronymic agencies. Hoover created a \$2 billion deficit, which he followed with one of the largest tax increases in American history.

Roosevelt was no enemy of Hoover's economic voodoo, and his New Deal saved nothing. The American economy worsened during Roosevelt's first eight years in office. In 1929, employment was 3.2 percent. By 1934, it was 24.9 percent. It was 19 percent in 1938. The average jobless rate from 1933 to 1940 was 17.7 percent, and this was after doubling government expenditures and the creation of Roosevelt's myriad alphabet-soup agencies. Nor did Roosevelt help the gross national product. It was \$857 per capita in 1929. By 1938, it was \$794. In 1940, it had risen to just \$916.

As DiLorenzo writes, "as of 1940, the economy had not recovered It was not until 1947, when the wartime economic controls were ended and govern-

ment spending and employment levels fell dramatically, that prosperity was restored. Federal government expenditures fell from \$98.4 billion in 1945 to \$33 billion by 1948, the first full year of genuine recovery."

John T. Flynn, the anti-Roosevelt journalist, rightly called FDR's economic policies "the Dance of the Crackpots," observing their kinship to Mussolini's fascism. And indeed, in economics the New Deal was modeled after the corporatism practiced by *il Duce*.

DiLorenzo closes by looking at developments on today's front lines in the never-ending war against the free market. One is the struggle against Big Tobacco, and you won't be surprised to learn who is getting rich: lawyers. Next up is the war against Big Food, whose fast food is held to be responsible for American obesity. Lawsuits to be announced.

One quibble with DiLorenzo's book is its title, *How Capitalism Saved America. How Free Enterprise Made America* might have been better. America has not been saved either from the socialists who would destroy our right to own private property or from the phony capitalists who clamor for corporate welfare. Karl Marx, DiLorenzo reminds us, coined "capitalism" and "capitalists" as pejoratives. And it seems most capitalists today are less inclined toward the free market and than toward garnering state-granted privileges of their own. Few, if any, suggest scrapping the unconstitutional cabinet departments and regulatory agencies that distort the market and enrich one American at the expense of another.

In this fine book, DiLorenzo derails the Delphic engineers steering the train of socialism and central planning. Pulling the curtain on their mythology, he reveals a simple truth: the free market creates prosperity. ■

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House of Fraud



A British friend of the female persuasion recently visited Saudi Arabia on assignment. She was an exception to the rule, as foreign women are as

welcome in the “kingdom” as Monica Lewinsky would be in Chappaqua, New York. Needless to say, she had a few choice words for the Saudi ruling clique, words that couldn’t possibly be printed in this family-oriented magazine. Let’s take it from the top.

Big Macs, Cokes, Starbucks, Pizza Huts—all the symbols of Western culture, godless decadence, and greed—are everywhere in Saudi Arabia, a perfect illustration of Saudi philistinism if there ever was one. On the other hand, there are no cinemas, no music, no alcohol, and women are not allowed to drive, vote, or attend physical-education classes in school. Sweet young Saudi things must go to segregated classes and pray in segregated mosques. And, of course, they must always wear black headscarves and cloaks.

None of this is news. What is new is that the ruling Saudis have pretended to mend their ways since Sept. 11, 2001, as big a crock as there is, and gullible Uncle Sam seems to have swallowed it. Even eyebrow plucking is considered a religious issue in Saudi Arabia. Nothing has changed, no matter what Bandar and his gang are feeding the White House. Mind you, the towelheads must have a good laugh over what fools we Westerners are. How can they not? Saudi schoolchildren are taught that it is forbidden for a Muslim to befriend anyone who does not believe in Allah, and anyone who makes friends with an infidel is deviating from the path of truth. A textbook for eighth graders explains to pupils that Christians and Jews were

cursed by Allah and turned into apes and pigs. No matter how their flacks spin it, that is not tolerance, not peace, not respect for other cultures or other faiths, but institutionalized hatred for “infidels” and “heretics”—namely us.

And it gets worse. The founder of the Saudi state religion, a Neanderthal by the name of Abd al-Wahhab, declared that Muslims like Shias, Sufis, and Ismailis are also heretics, which means in reality that Saudi petrodollars will continue to finance non-stop violence against all and sundry.

What in Allah’s name is going on here? Well, how about this: it is the House of Saud—which has spent its petrodollars not only on armaments, palaces, private planes, yachts, hookers, and booze, but also in funding extremist Wahhabi mosques all over the West—that is responsible. It is this venal plutocracy that has allied itself with the most violently puritanical Islamic sect in order to be allowed to keep its privileges. It is the Saudi so-called royal family that refuses to take on the extremists because it knows if it did, it would lose. Mind you, not a very pretty picture. Corruption dominates Saudi Arabia, with 25 percent of Saudi GDP being spent by some 7,000 ex-camel drivers posing as princes. With oil over \$50 per barrel, the royals have never been richer. And as every imam in the country is on the government’s payroll, never has more moolah financing intolerance and terror poured into their coffers.

So there we have it. The oil money buys off critics while it finances terror,

however indirectly. The Saudis lie to the West about their efforts to reform, and we fall for it like the fools that we are. In the meantime, hundreds of billions of dollars have been transferred to accounts in foreign banks, which makes surveillance of the traffic impossible. It is the biggest, as well as the sickest, joke of all. Saudi transparency, that is. In fact, Western intelligence agencies have been discouraged from reporting on the excesses of the leading kleptocrats and the activities of the Wahhabi clergy. Everyone who needs their oil is in denial, starting with the White House.

Personally, I thought the case of the Brit who was found guilty of running a prostitution ring for the “royal” Saudi family—and others—was typical. David Barrett, 33, a former model, “acted as an intermediary with male and female prostitutes on behalf of or for the royal Saudi family...” a Paris court said after sentencing him to a four-year prison term. Barrett, who was arrested in March 2003, had some \$300,000 in his possession. Not bad for a pimp. No Saudi was booked, of course, which is par for the course.

The latest from the “kingdom” was an announcement that women would neither vote nor run in Saudi Arabia’s first nationwide election. Again, no surprise, but at least not as bad as what took place two years ago in a girls’ school during a fire in the holy city of Mecca. The religious police refused to let girls escape because they were not wearing their hejabs. They fought firefighters to stop them from rescuing the improperly dressed teenagers. Fifteen girls died. Even the supine Saudi press was outraged at this one, although the government promised an investigation. Nothing came of it. Nice friends, these Saudis. ■



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